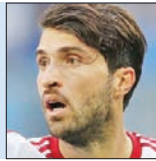




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Iranian women gather to mark Modesty and Hijab Day

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© Tehran Times/ Hamid Vakili

Zarif: U.S. isolated after IAEA board meeting

TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says the United States became politically isolated in an emergency meeting held by the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the Austrian capital, Vienna. Speaking on Thursday with Lebanon-based Arabic-language al-Mayadeen television news network on the failure experienced by Washington, Zarif said,

"The U.S. political isolation will soon lead to an economic one." The emergency meeting of the 35-member board was held a day earlier at U.S. request to address Iran's exceeding of the limit set by the 2015 nuclear deal on its uranium enrichment level, regardless of the fact that Washington itself committed the biggest breach against the agreement last May by leaving it. **→2**

Tehran, Muscat stress expansion of transportation ties

TEHRAN — Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani met with Oman's Minister of Transport and Communications Ahmed Mohammed Salem Al-Futaisi in Muscat and emphasized the need for strengthening transport and infrastructure cooperation between the two countries in order to provide basis for expansion of trade ties.

As reported by IRNA on Friday, in the meeting Rahmani mentioned the two countries' cooperation in the North-South Corridor, saying "One of the main axes in the development of bilateral relations is the implementation of Ashkhabad agreement and Oman's collaboration in North-South corridor." **→4**

IRGC hits terrorists' training centers at border with Iraqi Kurdistan

TEHRAN — Ground Forces of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) issued a statement on Friday saying that it has struck the training centers of the terrorists in Iran's borders with the Iraqi Kurdistan.

The IRGC said it used missile, drone and artillery units to destroy the terrorist groups' bases and training centers during the operation.

The headquarters were destroyed

and a number of terrorists were killed or wounded, the statement added.

The IRGC also highlighted that terrorists have been trying to use villagers as human shields, urging Iraqi Kurdistan people to stay away from the positions of terrorist groups and disavow them.

The statement said that the IRGC Ground Forces have been hitting headquarters of anti-revolutionary groups used for training since Wednesday. **→3**

How to avoid a conspicuous catastrophe

Analysis

TEHRAN — It is no secret to the reader that the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran have been at odds with each other for the past forty years. The main reason for this animosity stems from their respective divergent political mindsets; each looking at the world from a different angle. Iran declaring itself as an egalitarian modern, independent nation state with ethical and religious values and the U.S. depicting itself as a savior of liberalism.

Both have global aspirations but with different goals and aims. Iran aspiring for generalization of justice, fairness and equality among world nations while the U.S. striving for expanding hegemonism. Beside the difference in the worldviews, Iran is a status quo and an influential regional power but the U.S. is an expansionist big power trying to become the sole one.

Ever since the revolution, Iran has been insistent and steadfast on safeguarding its sovereignty and rights, including the development of peaceful nuclear technology as its inalienable right. However, the U.S., exercising its influence internationally, began to use the fabricated nuclear issue as a pretext against Iran and imposed inhumane sanctions against our nation. Utilizing their formidable mass media, they began a futile attempt to turn this pretext into a widespread public belief and subsequently use it as an instrument of political pressure.

The sanctions were everything but effective and it was Iran's resilience which left no option to the previous U.S. administration other than coming to terms with Iran. Within this environment the then secret two-track negotiations based on request by the U.S. administration through the Omani interlocutor began in 2011 and after two rounds of negotiations the U.S. through the

intermediary (Sultan of Oman) informed Iran of its intention and readiness to recognize Iran's enrichment right (see the attached enclosed letter, originally in Arabic).

These negotiations culminated in a nuclear deal called the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action). After about two years since its implementation the new U.S. administration withdrew from the deal with the excuse that the deal has been the worst in its kind in all American history. This being the case, Iran's response had been one of strategic endurance. However, the U.S. kept on increasing the sanction pressure which eventually led Tehran to begin exercising its right as envisioned in paragraphs 26 and 36 of the deal and thereby suspending parts of nuclear limitations set in the deal so as to remedy the lost balance between its rights and commitments until Europeans rectify the imbalance. **→3**

EU mulls adding Saudi Arabia to new money laundering grey list

TEHRAN — The European Union, under pressure from Saudi Arabia, may add the Arab kingdom to a money laundering grey list, five months after blacklisting it.

According to an EU confidential document, seen by Reuters, the bloc is preparing an overhaul of its listing of countries that pose money laundering risks, a move that will please the Arab kingdom.

Back in February, the oil-rich kingdom was added to the EU's blacklist of 23 jurisdictions that represent a threat to the European bloc over Riyadh's lax controls on terrorism financing and money laundering.

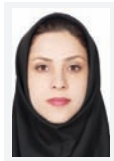
The Saudi pressure, however, forced the EU states to strike down the list, the document says.

The European governments, led by the UK and France, are in fact fearful of the economic impact of the listing, which has infuriated Riyadh. They



argue that the EU executive commission has given no chance to Saudi Arabia and other listed states to address concerns, Press TV reported.

The commissioner in charge of the issue, Czech



ARTICLE

Mahnaz Abdi
Head of the TehranTimes
Economy Desk

Ports' vital role in combatting sanctions

While Iran is combatting the U.S. unilateral sanctions on its economy, the country's ports as the major gates of exports and imports play some significant role in this combat. This role makes all-out support to ports and more development of them serious and vital.

Such necessity has led the government to define projects for more development of the ports and also take some measures to encourage investment making in ports and also to facilitate loading and unloading of goods, especially basic commodities, in the ports.

Loading and unloading of commodities in Chabahar Port, an important port in southeast of Iran, during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-May 21) has risen 30 percent compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to a deputy at Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO).

Hossein Shahdadi, the deputy head of Sistan-Baluchestan Province's Ports and Maritime Department, also announced that Chabahar is ready for on-time unloading of basic goods required inside the country.

In last November, the United States announced that it would grant a sanctions waiver for the Iranian-Indian port project at Chabahar.

After years of negotiations, Iran has awarded the development project of its strategic Chabahar Port to India, and the South Asian country committed \$500 million to build two new berths in this port.

Chabahar Port's exemption from the new round of the U.S. sanctions on Iran is an opportunity for development of transit via this port, according to PMO Head Mohammad Rastad.

This port's exemption from the sanctions provides the opportunity for benefiting from the potentials and infrastructures of Chabahar which will definitely boost exports and imports, Rastad said, adding that it would be an achievement for the country's economy.

Also, on May 21, the deputy director of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) said following a directive by President Hassan Rouhani, IRICA is providing new facilities for importers of basic goods which makes them able to clear their commodities in less than an hour. **→4**



ARTICLE

Morteza Khansari
political analyst

Has Trump fulfilled his campaign promises?

Donald Trump's foreign policies and security strategies have been recently called into question, even by the White House staff and the Congress. Since Trump took the office, averagely, at least one person from the administrative office of the White House got fired every month, and some of them were even put on trial. The last person who got fired was Sarah Sanders, the former White House press secretary.

Under current circumstances, the security and defense departments of the White House are having the most difficulty of all; now that Michael Flynn, H. R. McMaster and James N. Mattis were fired one after another, the eyes are on John Bolton. On the other hand, Trump's cabinet are under constant questions from members of the Parliament and this has added up to the frustration of the White House and United States National Security Council.

The recent attacks on oil tankers and commercial ships off the port of Fujairah in the Gulf of Oman was another failure of U.S. security strategies and proved the incompetency of American national security advisors, in this situation, Bolton could be the next victim.

In the verge of 2020 presidential elections, Trump lacks a strong and organized cabinet. Trump's success as a president must be judged by his campaign promises which included the disbandment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), building a wall at the US-Mexico border, leaving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and ending the costly wars that U.S. had led all over the world.

NATO

Over his presidential campaign, Trump had said that NATO is an obsolete and dysfunctional treaty, but a few months after he entered the White House, he yielded in and officially accepted NATO's article five. In NATO summit meeting in Brussels in 2017, Trump accepted that NATO's two new general headquarters will be placed in U.S. and Germany under the title of new centers of operation for tackling new challenges in the Mediterranean area and the Atlantic Ocean. **→13**

44 martyrs transferred to Iran via Shalamchehr border

The remains of 44 soldiers martyred during Saddam Hussein's war against Iran in the 1980s were transferred to Iran via the Shalamchehr border on Thursday and were honored by the people of the border cities of Abadan and Khorramshahr in Khuzestan Province.

General Mohammad Bagherzadeh, the commander of the search committee for the missing soldiers, said the remains of the 44 martyrs were discovered during the past two months in the regions of Shalamchehr, Katiban, East Euphrates, and Zebidat.

General Bagherzadeh said they were martyred in 1988.



© Tehran Times/ Hadi Abyar

Iran will give crushing response to any aggressor: defense minister

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Defense Minister Amir Hatami **d e s k** said on Friday that Iran will give a firm and crushing response to any aggressor.

“Any enemy who seeks to aggress against Iran at any level will face a firm and crushing response,” General Hatami asserted.



His remarks came as a response to comments by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at an Israeli air force base on Tuesday in which he said Iran is within range of Israeli air strikes.

Standing in front of an F-35 stealth fighter, Netanyahu said these planes can reach every place in the Middle East, including Iran and, certainly, Syria.

Hatami said Netanyahu's threats are clear violation of the UN Charter.

He urged the international bodies to respond to such “dangerous remarks”.

According to Fars news agency, Barry Grossman, an international lawyer and peace activist, said on Wednesday that Netanyahu's threat to use F-35 warplanes against Iran is funny because it is beyond Israel's capability.

Zarif says U.S. isolated after IAEA Board of Governors meeting

1 → Iran surpassed the 3.67-percent level in reaction to the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear accord and also in order to prompt other deal partners to ensure Tehran's business interests under the accord.

According to Iran's Ambassador to the IAEA, Kazem Gharib-Abadi, the U.S. had approached various delegations to have them join the request for the board meeting, but eventually had to make the request itself.



During the interview, Zarif also said the U.S. is abusing the dollar's power too much, and will gradually lose this advantage.

He also said Iran is prepared to confront any threat posed by the U.S. on any scale.

Iran is not after tension and war, but “they would be met with a decisive response if they rose in confrontation,” he said, Press TV reported.

He also stated that Iran's countermeasures were reversible if the U.S. sanctions were lifted and the Europeans honored their trade commitments to the Islamic Republic.

After leaving the nuclear agreement last year, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the U.S. re-imposed the sanctions that had been lifted under the deal and added new ones. It has also threatened the countries keeping their trade with Iran with “secondary sanctions.”

Speaking to reporters on Thursday, Foreign Minister Zarif lashed out at Washington for unilaterally pulling out of the JCPOA, which was struck between Iran and six major powers.

He reiterated that the U.S. isolated itself on the world stage by withdrawing from the JCPOA, citing Washington's failure to gain support for its anti-Iran accusations at the meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors.

“Under the current circumstances, the U.S. feels it has been defeated both politically and operationally,” he remarked.

“One of the reasons for the United States' defeat is the [Iranian] people's resistance,” the chief diplomat noted, adding that the “wrong policies pursued by the U.S. and its regional allies” have only made the resistance movement stronger.

He also said the U.S. needs to stop its “economic terrorism” against the Iranian nation if it really seeks talks with the Islamic Republic.

“We do not hold negotiations with those who have waged economic terrorism against our people. This must stop.”

“The U.S. political isolation will soon lead to an economic one,” Zarif predicts.

Britain to send second warship to Persian Gulf

Britain has brought forward plans to send a second warship to the Persian Gulf amid rising tensions with Iran, the BBC reported on Friday.

HMS Duncan is currently in the Mediterranean and is expected to join HMS Montrose in the region next week.

It comes after the U.S. claimed Iranian boats tried to impede a British oil tanker in the Persian Gulf on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Iran has been calling on Britain to release an Iranian-owned oil tanker that was detained by Royal Marines in Gibraltar on July 4 on alleged shipping of oil to Syria.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi has warned Britain not to get involved in “this dangerous game” plotted by the Trump administration.

Despite sending warships to the Persian Gulf, British ministers and officials have been claiming they do not want tensions with Iran to “escalate”.

Iran warns Britain not to get involved in ‘dangerous game’

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi has renewed its calls on Britain to immediately release its oil tanker.

“London's claims about seizing Iran's oil tanker are not credible from legal point of view and we urge the British to release this tanker as soon as possible,” he told IRNA in an interview published on Friday.

He noted that the British have been influenced by the U.S. and seek to enter a “dangerous game” that has been engineered by the White House.

“We want them to release this tanker immediately because it serves the interests of all,” he added.

On July 4, British Royal Marines in Gibraltar stormed the Iran-operated supertanker Grace 1 off the coast of Gibraltar, seizing the 300,000-ton vessel based on the accusation that it was carrying oil to Syria in possible violation of the European Union's sanctions on the war-torn Arab country.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry has said the seizure took place upon an order by the United States. White House national security advisor John Bolton has praised



the move.

Iran has said the act amounts to piracy.

Iran has denied reports that the super-tanker was carrying oil to Syria.

“Contrary to Britain's announcement, the tanker was not bound for Syria, and the port mentioned is not capable of receiving

such a tanker,” Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi told reporters on July 7.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Wednesday that the UK action in seizing Iran's oil tanker is a violation of the 2015 nuclear deal known as the JCPOA.

“Britain's recent action is violation of obligations done on behalf of the U.S. and has nothing to do with Syria. Seizure of this tanker is fundamental violation of the JCPOA,” Zarif stated.

Also on Monday, Zarif said the seizure of the tanker constitutes a concrete example of “piracy” which has been done on behalf of the B-Team. “UK's unlawful seizure of a tanker with Iranian oil on behalf of B-Team is piracy, pure and simple,” Zarif tweeted.

■ **‘Iran does not see its security in insecurity of neighbors’**

Mousavi also said that Iran has never seen its “security in insecurity of its neighbors”.

“Iran believes that security and stability in all neighboring countries will help security and stability of Iran. We advise those who feel they have an opportunity to practice enmity against Iran and have chosen another path, to be aware that this situation is transient and they should have a look on future,” he said.

He also noted that all regional countries should be vigilant about presence of foreign forces in the region.

Non-EU member states will join INSTEX: EU's Helga Schmid

By staff and agency

Secretary General of the European External Action Service (EEAS) Helga Schmid said on Thursday that countries outside the European Union will join the special financial mechanism for trade with Iran, known as INSTEX.

According to AP, she said that beyond the 10 EU nations that are already part of the system, she could “share with you that more, also non-EU member states, will join.”

Apart from the three EU member nations that are party to the deal - Britain, Germany and France - seven more EU member states have recently committed to take part.

The EU announced on June 28 that INSTEX has gone into effect.

INSTEX – the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges - is a European special purpose vehicle aimed at facilitating legitimate trade between Europe and Iran.

Tehran says the mechanism is far short of expectation. Iran insists the mechanism should include Iran's oil purchases.

Majid Takht Ravanchi, Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations, has likened INSTEX to a “beautiful car without gasoline”.

“The current situation of INSTEX does not suffice. This mechanism without money is like a beautiful car without gasoline,” he told reporters on June 29.

On May 8, exactly one year after the U.S. withdrew from the multi-nation nuclear agreement, Iran announced a partial withdrawal from some aspects of the pact, saying that the country would no longer adhere to some of the limits on its nuclear activities. It also threatened to step up uranium enrichment if an agreement is not made within 60 days to protect it from the sanctions' effects.

In follow-up to that deadline, on July 7 Iran announced that it has started enriching uranium to a higher purity than the 3.67% as the Europeans missed the 60-day deadline to devise a concrete mechanism to protect the country from the U.S. sanctions.



However, Iran has said if the remaining parties take concrete steps to shield the country from sanctions it will reverse its decisions.

Fact check: Trump wrong on all 3 claims in tweet on Iran deal

WASHINGTON (CNN) — President Donald Trump's Wednesday tweet on the Iran nuclear deal contained three inaccurate claims.

“Iran has long been secretly ‘enriching,’ in total violation of the terrible 150 Billion Dollar deal made by John Kerry and the Obama Administration,” Trump tweeted. “Remember, that deal was to expire in a short number of years.”

Facts First: All three parts of this tweet are wrong. International nuclear monitors and Trump's own intelligence officials say Iran complied until recently with the agreement's limits on its enrichment activities. Trump exaggerated the amount of money Iran gained access to because of the agreement. And he mischaracterized the deal by saying the whole thing would soon “expire.”

Let's go through the claims one by one.

■ **No evidence Iran was secretly enriching**

There is no public evidence to support Trump's claim that Iran “has long been secretly ‘enriching.’” The claim has been contradicted by the International Atomic Energy Agency, whose monitors were tasked with ensuring that Iran was complying with the terms of the 2015 deal, as well as by independent experts and by Trump's own top intelligence officials.

Iran announced this week that it was breaching a limit on uranium enrichment set by the agreement. But there was no evidence Iran had broken its enrichment promises under the agreement until now, much less that it had “long” done so.

“There is absolutely no truth to that statement. Iran has not, repeat not, been enriching in secret,” said Gary Sick, an Iran expert who served on the National Security Council under Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan.

Trump withdrew the U.S. from the multi-country agreement, formally the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, in May 2018. According to public comments from Trump's intelligence officials and the IAEA, Iran continued to comply with the enrichment provisions of the agreement, and the rest of the agreement's provisions, for the next year.

The agreement limited Iran, for 15 years, to enriching uranium to a maximum of a 3.67% concentration of a fissile isotope called U-235. That is a U-235 level suitable for use in a nuclear reactor but far from the approximately 90% suitable for use in a nuclear weapon.

As of this spring, the IAEA certified that Iran was still complying with the 3.67% limit. In a May 31 report, the IAEA again said: “Iran has not enriched uranium above 3.67% U-235.”

In January, U.S. Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats and Central Intelligence Agency director Gina Haspel, both of whom Trump appointed, told the Senate Intelligence Committee that Iran kept abiding by the terms of the agreement even after the U.S. withdrew.

Brett McGurk, who served as anti-ISIS special envoy under Trump and Barack Obama and before that as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Iraq and Iran, cast doubt on Trump's claim in his own tweets on Wednesday. Noting that Trump's assertion was “totally contrary to the unanimous assessment of our own intelligence community” earlier in the year, he said it was “likely to further undermine American credibility in these partner capitals.”

Trump, of course, has access to secret intelligence we do not. But he has presented no proof whatsoever that his top intelligence appointees and international experts have been incorrect.

■ **Trump's \$150 billion figure is too high**

Trump has repeatedly claimed that the agreement involved a \$150 billion payment the U.S. made to Iran. He was a little vaguer than usual this time, but his claim that this was a “150 Billion Dollar deal” was still inaccurate.

The U.S. did not pay Iran even tens of billions of American dollars in the agreement. Rather, the U.S. agreed to unfreeze a significant sum of Iran's assets that had been frozen in international financial institutions, predominantly outside the U.S., because of sanctions against Iran.

Trump did not invent the \$150 billion figure out of thin air: Obama himself mused in a 2015 interview about Iran having “\$150 billion parked outside the country.” But experts on Iran policy, and Obama's own administration, said that the quantity of assets the agreement actually made available to Iran was much lower.

In 2015, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew put the number at \$56 billion. PolitiFact reported that Garbis Iradian, chief economist at the Institute of International Finance, put it at about \$60 billion, and that Nader Habibi, professor of economics of the Middle East at Brandeis University, thought it was between \$25 billion and \$50 billion after discussing the issue with officials at Iran's Central Bank.

Adam Szubin, a senior Treasury Department official, testified to Congress in 2015 that the “usable liquid assets” would total “a little more than \$50 billion.” The rest of Iran's foreign assets, he said, were either tied up in “illiquid” projects “that cannot be monetized quickly, if at all, or are composed of outstanding loans to Iranian entities that

cannot repay them.”

■ **The agreement wouldn't have expired soon**

Trump could have accurately said that some central provisions of the agreement would have expired in the next 10 to 15 years. But the deal as a whole -- including a blanket prohibition on Iran developing nuclear weapons -- was written to continue in perpetuity.

“It's not accurate to say the deal expires,” said Naysan Rafati, Iran analyst at the International Crisis Group. “Certain clauses of the deal expire and a lot of the key clauses don't expire.”

The deal includes important sunset clauses. Its limits on the number of first-generation centrifuges Iran can possess, and on the research and development of more advanced centrifuges, are scheduled to end in 2025. The 3.67% uranium purity limit is to end in 2030.

So is the 300-kilogram limit on Iran's stockpile of low-enriched uranium, which Iran said last week it has now broken. And so is the ban on building a new heavy-water reactor and on reprocessing spent fuel, which effectively bars Iran from developing a plutonium weapon.

However, some of the limits in the deal extend past 2030 -- and some do not expire at all. Centrifuge production sites are to be under continuous surveillance until 2035. Iran's uranium mines and mills are to be monitored until 2040.

Other provisions were written to be in place in perpetuity. For example, Iran is permanently required to provide advance notice of plans to build a nuclear facility. Iran promised that it will not “ever” seek a nuclear weapon. And IAEA monitoring of Iran's nuclear activities is to continue indefinitely.

IRGC rejects U.S. claim it attempted to seize British tanker

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) on Thursday dismissed a claim by the U.S. that its naval forces tried to stop a British oil tanker in the Persian Gulf.

Early on Thursday, two American officials, who were speaking to Reuters on the condition of anonymity, claimed that five boats believed to belong to the IRGC had approached the tanker, British Heritage, at the northern entrance of the Strait of Hormuz and ordered it to stop.

The Iranian boats dispersed, said one of the sources, after the UK's Royal Navy frigate HMS Montrose, which had been escorting the tanker, “pointed its guns at the boats and warned them over radio.”

The other official also called the alleged incident an act of “harassment and an attempt to interfere with the passage.”

Rejecting the U.S. officials' claim, the IRGC stressed that Iranian boats were carrying out their normal duties.

“Patrols by the Guards' Navy vessels have been underway in the Persian Gulf based on current procedures and missions

assigned to them with vigilance, precision and strength,” the Public Relations Department of the IRGC Navy's Fifth Naval Zone said in a statement.

“In the past 24 hours, there has been no encounter with foreign ships, including British ones,” it added, according to Press TV.

The statement further said the IRGC Navy's fifth zone has the power to act “decisively and swiftly” and seize foreign vessels in the area it is tasked with patrolling if an order is issued to that effect.

Similarly, Britain claimed Thursday that three Iranian vessels had tried to block the passage of its tanker but backed off.

“HMS Montrose was forced to position herself between the Iranian vessels and British Heritage and issue verbal warnings to the Iranian vessels, which then turned away,” a British government representative said.

■ **Zarif says such claims “have no value”**

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif

also reacted to the allegations, saying they are merely meant to create tensions.

Those who make such claims attempt to “cover up their weak point,” Zarif said.

“Apparently the British tanker has passed. What they have said themselves and the claims that have been made are for creating tension and these claims have no value,” Zarif remarked.

The claims came two weeks after British marines illegally seized an Iranian oil tanker in the Strait of Gibraltar under the pretext that the vessel had been suspected of carrying crude to Syria in violation of EU sanctions against the Arab country.

Reports, however, said the seizure took place at the request of the U.S.

The Islamic Republic condemned the illegal seizure as “maritime piracy” and summoned the British ambassador on three occasions to convey its protest at the confiscation.

U.S. ‘holding off’ sanctions on FM Zarif: sources

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The U.S. **d e s k** has decided to put off imposing sanctions on Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif for now, Reuters quoted two unnamed sources as saying on Thursday.

Last month, U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin announced that Zarif would be blacklisted as part of the U.S. policy to put “maximum pressure” on Iran and its top officials.

Blacklisting Iran’s chief diplomat would be in stark contrast with Washington’s repeated calls for dialogue with Tehran amid heightened tensions.

“Cooler heads prevailed. We ... saw it as not necessarily helpful,” said one source familiar with the matter who spoke on condition of anonymity, adding U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had opposed designating Zarif “for the time being.”

Zarif is expected to attend a ministerial meeting at the United Nations next week on sustainable development goals, which aim to tackle issues including conflict, hunger, gender equality and climate change by 2030. To do so, the United States would have to grant him a visa.

On July 4, the New York Times quoted Zarif as saying that he did not own any



property or have any bank accounts outside Iran. “So I have no personal problem with possible sanctions,” he said.

However, Tehran insists that the imposition of the new sanctions on top Iranian officials by the U.S. is synonymous

with “permanent closure of the path to diplomacy.”

“The Trump administration is violating all established international mechanisms for maintaining global peace and security,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas

Mousavi said after the U.S. announced its sanctions against top Iranian officials, which also included the office of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and senior commanders of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC).

Iran and the U.S. have been at odds since last year when Trump withdrew from a 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and major powers and reimposed sanctions on Tehran.

Meanwhile, the Iranian foreign minister has warned of plans by a “B-team” to lure Trump into a war with Tehran.

Zarif refers to U.S. national security adviser John Bolton, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, and UAE Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed as the B-team who “despise diplomacy, and thirst for war.”

On Monday, he said the B-team pressured Trump to kill the nuclear deal under the illusion that they can secure a better deal through “economic terrorism” against Iran.

“B-Team sold Donald Trump on the folly that killing JCPOA through Economic Terrorism can get him a better deal,” Zarif remarked.

Authorities unanimous on Iran’s JCPOA move: cleric

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Hojjatolislam Kazem **d e s k** Seddiqi, the interim Friday prayer leader of Tehran, says authorities unanimously agree on reducing Iran’s commitments to the 2015 nuclear deal, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

“The two-month deadline has ended, and today, by the grace of God, all authorities are unanimous on reduction of commitments,” Kazem Seddiqi told worshippers in Tehran on Friday.

He described the JCPOA as a fruitless deal and criticized Europeans for being obedient to the U.S. in revoking the JCPOA and imposed sanctions on Iran.

“After a year (since the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA),



not only the Europeans have failed to fulfill their obligations but also they have in practice become obedient to the U.S.,” he remarked.

Invoking the remarks made by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei that “if they tear up the JCPOA, we will set it on fire,” the cleric said that “it was not necessary to give a 60-day ultimatum to the Europeans.”

“It does not make sense to remain unilaterally committed to a multilateral deal,” he said. “According to paragraphs 26 and 36 of the JCPOA, each of the parties is allowed to reduce commitments due to other parties’ lack of commitment.”

We will never forget Iranian support for Turkey against coup plotters in 2016: embassy

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The Turkish **d e s k** embassy in Tehran says Ankara will “never forget” Iran’s political for the “elected government of Turkey” against the coup plotters in 2016.

The statement was released on the third anniversary of the coup.

The following is the full text of the statement a copy of which sent to the Tehran Times:

Turkey averted a heinous coup attempt targeting our democracy and independence by the unwavering will and courage of the Turkish people three years ago today. We would ever grieve for our martyrs who lost their lives to defend the country and protect the constitutional order in Turkey. However, we seek consolation in the fact that the Turkish people epitomized a rare example of patriotic and popular support for democracy.

The coup plotters made a treacherous attempt on the lives of the Turkish people, bombed the building of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey the symbol of our democracy and martyred officers on duty and civilian people.

It was substantiated with solid proof that

the Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETO) was behind this heinous attempt staged on 15th of July. Within this context, firstly, on the basis of the rule of law, the perpetrators of the 15th of July coup attempt have been brought to justice. FETO’s organizational structure within governmental institutions has been unveiled; administrative and judicial procedures have been initiated against its members and hence the “parallel state structure” has been brought down.

As Turkey’s fight against FETO continues, we expect to see international community and friendly countries on our side. FETO terrorist organization tries to portray itself as a social movement that engages with education and charity, however contrary to the way it tries to portray itself, it is rather a dark and insidious organization with political and economic ambitions. For that reason, it is not only a threat for Turkey but for all countries.

The Islamic Republic of Iran’s denunciation of the coup attempt and its political support for the elected government of Turkey has been congruous with our long history of friendly relations. We will never forget Iranian support at this critical



moment in Turkish history.

Indeed, we are aware that state of Iran have never given the chance to FETO for gaining ground and poisoning the country with its activities. We fully believe that our countries will maintain the cooperation with the same determination against discrete attempts in this direction.

Distinguished members of press, On the occasion of 15th of July

Democracy and National Unity Day, we commemorate our 251 brothers who were martyred in this honorable fight for democracy, and we express our gratitude to more than two thousand veterans for their courage and commitment to their country. Our efforts to fully eliminate the structures of FETO abroad constitutes a long-term fight. The Turkish Government resolutely maintain its efforts in that regard.

Trump’s Iran policy has killed far beyond 150 Iranians: Fareed Zakaria

(Press TV) — President Donald Trump’s “incoherent and ill-planned” Iran policy openly targets civilians and is breeding regional resentment against the U.S., CNN’s Fareed Zakaria says.

“When President Trump announced last month that he had called off military strikes against Iran, he said it was because he learned that an estimated 150 Iranians would have died in those attacks. Instead he has further tightened economic sanctions against Iran,” Zakaria wrote in the Washington Post on Thursday.

The widely-respected journalist was referring to Trump’s recent claims after Iran shot down a sophisticated U.S. spy drone near the Strait of Hormuz for intruding into the Iranian airspace.

Zakaria cited Jeffrey Sachs, an economist who has studied the effects of sanctions, as saying that the measures are having a “massive and crippling” effect on Iran.

“Sanctions like these are known to cause a significant rise in mortality. Given the size of Iran’s population, around 81 million, this is sure to be far larger than 150 deaths,” Zakaria quoted him as saying.

“And keep in mind, the people who would have died in the military strikes probably would have been Iranian soldiers. Those who are now dying because of sanctions are newborn babies, mothers, the elderly and sick,” he added.

The CNN anchor also cited an academic study pointing out that “sanctions produce widespread drug shortages, and that those who suffer most are ‘patients struggling with cancer, multiple sclerosis, blood disorders, and other serious conditions.’”

Zakaria hit out at Trump’s withdrawal from a 2015



nuclear deal with Iran even though Tehran was adhering to its commitments, saying by leaving the pact, the U.S. has allowed Tehran to start moving away from its obligations.

“The Trump administration has created a humanitarian crisis in Iran and a geopolitical crisis in the Middle East with no strategy for resolving either,” he wrote.

Zakaria said a White House news release last week claiming that Iran was violating the nuclear deal even before its existence was “the best illustration of the incoherence of the Trump administration’s strategy toward Iran.”

“The White House has not subsequently explained how a country can violate the terms of a deal before that

deal existed,” he wrote.

The Trump administration has also made numerous other dubious statements against Iran and its nuclear program on past occasions.

Earlier this week, Trump in a tweet claimed that Iran had been secretly enriching uranium in violation of the nuclear deal.

This comes as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has for 15 times confirmed Iran’s full compliance with the deal. Iran’s compliance has also been verified by Trump’s own top intelligence officials.

The CNN later published a report further outlining Trump’s clear inaccurate claims regarding the deal, highlighting that the JCPOA did not give Iran “\$150 Billion” nor was it to “expire in a short number of years” as Trump had claimed in the tweet.

Instances displaying the Trump Administration’s inaccurate understanding of the Iranian nuclear deal have also prompted many analysts to further question Washington’s position against Iran, believing that Trump has underestimated Tehran’s resolve.

Zakaria believes that even if Washington’s pressure against Iran were to succeed in pressuring Tehran into any temporary concession, Iran would “find a way to return with a vengeance.”

“The Trump administration seems to forget that the Iranian civilization has been a major player in the Middle East for thousands of years. It has a population more than double the size of Iraq’s and is more strategically located. It has a strong tradition of nationalism and statecraft and a history of resisting foreign domination,” he said.

Zarif marks Srebrenica genocide, warns of anti-Muslim bigotry

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad **d e s k** Javad Zarif has marked the 24th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, saying such horrors must not be forgotten in the current era of increasingly normalized anti-Muslim bigotry.



In a tweet on Friday, Zarif said 24 years ago this day “over 8,000 Bosnian Muslims were massacred on European soil—the worst atrocity on the continent since WWII.”

“In this age of increasingly normalized anti-Muslim bigotry, such horrors MUST’NT be forgotten—not by Muslims, and not by Europeans,” he added.

July 11 marked the 24th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre, the worst atrocity on European soil after World War II.

In July 1995, Serb forces systematically killed more than 8,000 Bosniak Muslim men and boys in the so-called UN-protected enclave in Srebrenica, Bosnia.

More than 1,000 are still considered missing from the mass slaughter during the Bosnian civil war.

Many victims were ambushed along forest routes while fleeing Srebrenica in scorching heat without food or water. They were either shot on the spot, or taken to collective centers where they were executed and thrown into mass graves.

Female candidates named to become ambassadors: Foreign Ministry spokesman

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman **d e s k** Abbas Mousavi has said between 20 to 30 new ambassadors will be introduced by the end of summer and that a number of female candidates have been proposed by the Foreign Ministry to take ambassadorial posts.

“Now is almost the time of replacing the ambassadors,” Mousavi told IRNA in an interview published on Friday. “In summer, experts and top diplomats would be replaced at the end of their tenure.”

He said the administrative procedure of the changes is underway and after the final decision, the new envoys will be introduced.

How to avoid a conspicuous catastrophe

1 → The U.S. after many acerbic comments against Iran and the declaration of twelve irrational and submissive demands, eventually came to its senses and yielded to the facts on the ground and reduced its demands to only a specific one. President Trump iterated a number of times that their only demand is for Iran to denounce the possession of Nuclear Weapon. On the other hand, Iran traditionally never trusting the U.S. administration’s promises and commitments has so far categorically refused any direct negotiation, because there is absolutely no guarantee that such second round of negotiations wouldn’t face the same fate as the first one. As the Supreme Leader has reiterated, “no direct negotiation under pressure and that such negotiation is poisonous.”

The main question now is: “Is there a way out of this impasse?” Certainty, the continuation of the current dire situation—without any exaggeration—would lead into undetermined and appalling consequences. Surely, such an unpleasant circumstance is not welcome by us.

Yet, there may be a solution taking into consideration the aforementioned constraints, namely, “no direct negotiation under pressure” on the one hand and “denouncement of Nuclear Weapon possession” on the other hand. The solution may lie in simultaneous revocation of all U.S. sanctions and Iran’s denouncement of production, accumulation and use of Nuclear Weapons—as previously declared in a decree (Fatwa) by the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei in 2009 and having been registered in the United Nations in 2013—through a joint statement by the heads of state of 4+1 plus the U.S. and the Islamic Republic of Iran. This mechanism that does not entail direct negotiations could possibly pave the way for future to hopefully make up for the confidence and trust lost all during the past decades.

IRGC hits terrorists’ training centers at border with Iraqi Kurdistan

1 → The raids took place after authorities at the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) did not heed the IRGC’s earlier warnings that terrorist groups are using border areas to train, organize and dispatch terror teams into Iran, the statement said.

The statement added that the raids came in the wake of a recent deadly terror attack against IRGC members as well as “desperate attempts” by the terrorists to undermine security in some regions of Iran’s western and northwestern areas.

Also, the IRGC Ground Forces issued a statement on Thursday announcing dismantling a foreign-sponsored terrorist team in the western city of Javanroud and killing at least five terrorists.

The forces also found a large number of weapons and communications equipment from the terrorists, the statement said, adding that one of the IRGC base’s forces was martyred in the conflict.

STOCK MARKET

TEDPIX	249622.1
IFX	3254.64

Sources: tse.ir, Ifb.ir

CURRENCIES

USD	42,000 rials
EUR	47,360 rials
GBP	52,636 rials
AED	11,437 rials

Source: cbi.ir

COMMODITIES

Brent	\$66.81/b
WTI	\$60.36/b
OPEC Basket	\$66.10/b
Gold	\$1,409.45/oz
Silver	\$15.18/oz
Platinum	\$823.70/oz

Sources: oilprice.com, Moneymetals.com

Iran exports €25m of pistachio to EU countries in 4 months

ECONOMY **TEHRAN**— According to the data released by European Union's statistics agency Eurostat, the union's member states have imported €25.4 million of pistachio from Iran during the first four months of 2019.



Eurostat data show that Iran's exports of pistachio to the EU countries during January-April of this year has fallen 73 percent from that of the same period of time in the past year, which was €94.5 million, Tasnim news agency reported on Friday.

As reported, Germany, Spain, Greece, Italy and Poland were the major importers of pistachio from Iran in the first four months of 2019.

Singapore not expecting full-year recession at this point, says DPM Heng Swee Keat

By Tang See Kit

Singapore is not expecting a full-year recession at this point, although economic growth slowed to its lowest in a decade in the second quarter, Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat said on Friday.

There remain areas of strength in the economy, he added in a Facebook post, noting that these include the information and communications sector, as well as the construction sector.

Mr. Heng, who is also Finance Minister, said the latest flash estimates for Singapore's gross domestic product released on Friday morning reflect heightened uncertainties and risks in the global economy, especially with trade tensions between the United States and China.

But the Republic is prepared for the cycles the economy will go through and must continue to focus on the medium and long term, even as it tackles short-term challenges and helps those affected, he said.

The "government is monitoring the situation closely, and is working with employers and unions to prepare for all scenarios," he added.

The "future Economy Council will continue with our industry transformation plans, build stronger enterprise capabilities, and make the most of the opportunities around us," said Mr. Heng, who also chairs the council tasked with charting and driving the transformation of Singapore's economy.

On Friday, two ministers also said that businesses and workers in weakened sectors will get help to adjust to new realities, and the focus has to be on preparing for the long term.

Shifts in supply chains

Trade and Industry Minister Chan Chun Sing said in a Facebook post that the Republic is dealing with longer-term shifts in supply chains and production patterns, and its strategy is not to artificially boost demand in general.

Rather, it will surgically help companies and workers adjust to new realities.

"We must therefore focus on our long-term fundamentals of building real and new capabilities, expanding into new markets and acquiring new skills," he said. The "government will continue to help our businesses transform their businesses and workers acquire new skills to keep pace with the changes."

In a separate Facebook post, Manpower Minister Josephine Teo noted there are still around 60,000 unfilled vacancies, half of them for professionals, managers, executives and technicians (PMETs) in sectors like financial services, professional services and infocomm technology.

New and better jobs continue to emerge, and there is no shortage of programs to support the transition for workers who are willing, she added.

Their comments come as the latest Ministry of Trade and Industry flash estimate showed Singapore's economy grew 0.1 percent year on year in the second quarter, and shrank by 3.4 percent on a quarter-on-quarter basis. This has prompted economists to warn of a heightened possibility of a technical recession - two consecutive quarters of slowdown.

In his post, Mr. Chan said the current challenges are different from those of the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis and the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, when a sudden loss of confidence in global financial markets triggered a sharp downturn in the Singapore economy.

(Source: straitstimes.com)

Tehran, Muscat stress expansion of transportation ties

1 → He further pointed to Iran's capacities and capabilities, especially in the port cities of Chabahar and Bandar Abbas, saying, "The expansion of relations with neighbors has a special place in Iran's strategic planning and policies."

Al-Futaisi for his part, welcomed economic cooperation with Iran in all areas, saying that Oman's policy is to develop relations with its neighbors, especially the Islamic Republic of Iran, and it welcomes any strategy to expand all-out relations.

Referring to his country's infrastructure facilities for establishing aviation and maritime transportation routes, he said, "There are now several air routes between the two countries, and cooperation in maritime area should also be given such an attention and importance."

\$4b trade turnover on the agenda

During his visit to the Sultanate, Rahmani also held talks with Ali bin Masoud al Sunaidi, Oman's minister of commerce and industry, during which the two sides called for expansion of trade ties.

The officials stressed the need for facilitating



Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani met with Oman's Minister of Transport and Communications Ahmed Mohammed Salem Al-Futaisi (R) in Muscat.

trade so that the trade between the two neighbors would reach the targeted \$4 billion a year.

In the meeting the two sides also discussed issues regarding the upcoming 18th Iran-Oman

Iran, Syria agree to jointly manufacture passenger cars

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran and Syria signed an agreement for joint manufacturing of passenger cars, Fars news agency reported.

The agreement was signed by Iranian Minister of Labor, Cooperatives and Social Welfare Mohammad Shariatmadari and Syrian Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Rima al-Qadiri on Wednesday in Tehran.

Based on the agreement, an Iranian sedan, branded as Shaam, the Arabic word for Levant, will be jointly manufactured with Syria.

In the signing ceremony in Tehran, al-Qadiri said some Iranian vehicles are currently being assembled in the Arab country, reassuring that industrial cooperation between Tehran and Damascus will increase in the post-war era.

"Although our car factories have sustained serious damage in the war, since the end of the war we have been endeavoring to help them restore their production to let Syria keep manufacturing vehicles. Currently, the production line for the Iranian car, Shaam, is working," the Syrian official said on the sidelines of the ceremony.

"We are hopeful to see the Syrian nation's final victory to restore jobs and employment in the country," al-Qadiri added.

Iran is the major car maker in the Middle East region, and the country has many joint plants with other countries of the world.

In her visit to Tehran, al-Qadiri also held talks with Iran's Transport Minister Mohammad Eslami and discussed economic relations, the ministry's portal reported.

In the meeting the two sides underlined the positive political and economic relations between the two countries and called for further expansion of trade ties.

They also discussed some of the



Iran's Transport Minister Mohammad Eslami (right) held talks with Syrian Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Rima al-Qadiri (middle) in Tehran on Wednesday.

agreements reached during the two countries' 14th joint economic committee meeting.

Mentioning Iran's significant role in Syria's political stability and independence, al-Qadiri noted that Iran has a great share in Syria's recent victories.

In late June, the portal of Iran's ministry of cooperatives, labor, and social welfare reported that Iran is going to provide Syria with technical training and support regarding the labor market policies and rehabilitation of rural employment.

As reported, Shariatmadari met with Rima al-Qadiri on the sidelines of the 108th Session of the International Labor Conference (ILO) in Geneva and expressed the country's readiness regarding the matter.

In that meeting, Shariatmadari also underlined the importance of Syria's reconstruction for Iran and voiced the country's readiness for cooperation in this regard and pointed to his ministry's capacities and capabilities in realizing this goal.

Al-Qadiri for her part, expressed her gratitude for Iran's efforts in supporting Syria and called for further support regarding work force training, educating labor market policies and job creation in Syria.

'Neighboring countries willing to expand economic ties with Iran'

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Saying that Iran's neighboring countries are eager for the expansion of economic and trade ties with the Islamic Republic, Iranian deputy minister of industry, mining and trade put emphasis on the necessity of boosting ties with the neighbors.

Referring to the good potential of the neighbors, Saeed Zarandi said that Iran's 15 neighboring countries with the population of over 600 million people are export markets of \$1.3 trillion per year, IRNA reported.

Increasing non-oil exports to the neighboring countries is one of the major plans that Iranian government is pursuing in the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 21).

Iran shares border with fifteen countries, namely the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Russia, Oman, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kuwait, Qatar, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia.

Based on the data published by Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), the value of trade with the neighboring countries stood at over \$36.5 billion in the past Iranian calendar year, that is about 41 percent of the country's total non-oil trade in the mentioned time span.

Iran plans to launch 15 mega export projects to identify more target markets, according to TPO head.

Mohammadreza Modoudi said with the implementation of these projects, which mainly focus on the markets of neighboring countries, identifying professional trade and promoting export of non-oil commodities will be put on agenda, Mehr news agency reported.



Also on June 24, Sadeq Najafi, the senior advisor to Iran's industry, mining and trade minister, said the ministry has planned that the annual export of commodities and services to Iran's 15 neighbor countries will reach \$32 billion in the current Iranian calendar year.

Making the remarks in a meeting with the members of Iran's Free Trade Zone Fraction, the official mentioned supporting exports by the production units as another plan of the ministry in this year which is named the Year of Pickup in Production.

In mid-April, Iranian industry, mining and trade minister said the country plans to double its exports to the neighboring countries by the Iranian calendar year of 1400 (which starts in March 2021).

Mentioning the fact that only two percent of the total imports of Iran's neighbors comes from the Islamic country, Reza Rahmani noted that his ministry is going to focus on developing domestic production and defining new projects to manufacture all the industrial equipment needed inside the country.

The official further pointed to some of the potent areas which could be worked on in order to increase exports including home appliances, apparel industry, petrochemicals, and marine industries, basic metals such as steel, aluminum and copper as well as agriculture.

Ports' vital role in combatting sanctions



He said linking the cargo centers to the railway network has been started and implementation of the scheduled plan for the current year is on the agenda, adding that he major cargo centers

are planned to be linked to the railway based on a multi-year schedule.

All such measures and projects indicate the strong will for strengthening the role of ports specially during this time of sanctions.

And they are bringing results; as the head of PMO has announced that all port development projects are underway with no halt.

Despite the sanctions and the difficulties resulted from them, there are still high traffics in the ports which show that the country's shipping and port activities are running well, Mohammad Rastad has said and underlined taking advantage of such potential to materialize economic objectives of the country.

'Banking, transportation are main challenges in Iran-Malaysia trade'

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Malaysian Ambassador to Iran Datuk Rustam Yahaya said banking relations and transportation are the main challenges facing Iran and Malaysia in the way of boosting economic relations, the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) reported.

The official made the remarks in a meeting with ICCIMA Deputy Head for International Affairs Mohammadreza Karbasi and Head of Alborz Chamber of Commerce Rahim Banamolaie on Wednesday.

The ambassador also pointed to the significant increases in the shipping companies' insurance costs in the past few months, and called for mutual cooperation between the two countries to circumvent the U.S. sanctions.

Yahaya further announced the Malaysian prime minister's upcoming visit to Iran in October, suggesting that a business forum

be held during the PM visit.

The official also informed about the next Iran-Malaysia joint economic committee meeting which is due to be held in Kuala Lumpur.

In the meeting, Banamolaie for his part, mentioned Alborz province's factories and industrial zones including pharmaceutical plants as great opportunities for Malaysian investors and businesses for expansion of trade with Iran.

He also proposed to establish a joint financial and marketing organization in order to solve the financial and banking problems.

Joint investment and production without transferring money, supply of goods, exchange of tourists, and strengthening cooperation between Malaysian Chamber of Commerce and its designated chamber in Iran [which is the Alborz chamber] were among other issues that were discussed in the meeting.

Iran, Brazil seeking barter trade in face of U.S. sanctions

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Secretary of Iran-Brazil Chamber of Commerce said the two countries are seeking to establish bartering systems in order to keep their trade afloat during the sanctions era, ILNA reported.

"Currently, Brazil is one of the main providers of agricultural commodities to the country, however we are facing some banking issues in our trade and that is why the two sides are looking at bartering as a solution to this problem," Farhad Taherian told ILNA.

According to the official, Iranian imports from the Latin American country are limited to 12 major commodities.

Of the total imports, 48 percent is corn, 24 percent is soy, while soybean oil, tobacco, and ethanol are other imported goods.

Petrochemical products such as urea, bitumen and petroleum are the main exported goods from Iran to Brazil, according to Taherian.

The official noted that in the first Iranian calendar month of Farvardin (March 21-April 20) Iran exported \$32 million worth of commodities to Brazil.

In early May, Brazilian Ambassador to Iran Rodrigo de Azeredo Santos stated that Brazil wants to continue importing petrochemical products from Iran as the cost of producing these products is high in the Latin American country.

In an interview conducted by the Mehr news agency on June 11, Santos said the Brazilian government would spare no efforts to help Brazilian and Iranian firms develop relations after the U.S. withdrawal from Iran nuclear deal.

Also, in a meeting with the head of Iran's Industrial Development and Renovation Organization (IDRO) in Tehran, the Brazilian ambassador had announced his country's readiness for improvement of road transportation ties with Iran.

Iran 90% self-sufficient in renewables equipment

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** — Head of desk Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (known as SATBA) said on Thursday that currently 90 percent of the equipment used in the country's renewable power plants are manufactured inside the country.

"Iran-made renewable equipment are of very high quality and can compete with renowned brands in global markets," IRNA quoted Seyed Mohammad Sadeqzadeh as saying.

According to the official, the country's renewable industry has witnessed over 60% growth in the past few years.

"The development of renewable energies in underdeveloped areas of the country could boost their economy and also help maintaining the environment," Sadeqzadeh said.

The official further noted that in the past three years, the private sector has invested over \$3 billion in renewable projects.

According to SATBA, the number of small scale solar power plants across the country which are used by households or small industries is being increased noticeably as Iranian households and small industries have embraced the new technology with



open arms and investors also seem eager for more contribution in this area.

Currently over 100 large-scale renewable power plants are operating across Iran.

Earlier in May, Sadeqzadeh announced that Iran plans to add electricity generated

from renewable sources to its export basket.

According to the official the capacity of power generation from the renewable sources will exceed 1000MW by the end of the current Iranian year (March, 19 2020).

The capacity of Iran's renewable power

plants currently stands at 724 megawatts (MW) and 416 MW capacity of new power plants are also under construction, according to the Iranian Energy Ministry.

Of the country's total renewable capacity, 44 percent is the share of solar power plants while the share of wind farms stands at 40 percent and small-scaled hydropower plants generate 13 percent of the total renewable capacity.

The share of heat recovery plants and biomass plants are small with two percent and one percent respectively.

According to the energy ministry's portal known as PAVEN, currently renewable power plants have created 43,450 job opportunities across the country and the volume of private investment in this sector has exceeded 124 trillion rials (over \$2.95 billion).

Renewables, including hydropower, account for just six percent of the country's total energy generation, versus natural gas' 90 percent share.

Overall, in the next five years, Iran is aiming for a 5,000 MW increase in renewable capacity to meet growing domestic demand and expand its presence in the regional electricity market.

Oil lingers near six-week highs amid Gulf of Mexico storm, Middle East tensions

Oil prices hovered near six-week highs on Friday and was on track for a weekly gain as U.S. oil producers in the Gulf of Mexico cut more than half their output because of a tropical storm and as tensions continued to simmer in the Middle East.

As stated by uk.reuters.com, Brent crude LCOc1 futures were up 57 cents, or 0.9%, at \$67.09 per barrel by 0642 GMT. The international benchmark settled down 0.7% on Thursday after hitting its highest since May 30 at \$67.65.

U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude CLc1 futures were up 46 cents, or 0.8%, at \$60.66 a barrel. In the previous session, the U.S. benchmark rose to as much as \$60.94, its highest since May 23.

Brent prices have climbed 4.4% this week, while WTI prices rose 5.4%. Both the benchmark crudes posted declines last week.

By Thursday, oil companies in the Gulf of Mexico had cut more than 1 million barrels per day (bpd) of output, or 53% of the region's production, due to Tropical Storm Barry which could make landfall Saturday on the Louisiana coast.

The storm was forecast to become a category one hurricane



with winds of at least 74 miles per hour (119 km per hour).

"Brent crude oil ... extended its gains as storms in the Gulf of Mexico halted production of oil and U.S. oil inventories continued to recede more than expected," ANZ Bank said in a note.

U.S. crude oil inventories have decreased for four consecutive weeks. Crude stocks fell 9.5 million barrels in the

week to July 5, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) said, a drop that was more than triple the 3.1 million-barrel draw expected by analysts.

Kim Kwang-rae, commodity analyst at Samsung Futures in Seoul, said a sharp drop in U.S. crude stocks and geopolitical risks are expected to keep both Brent and WTI at current levels.

"As geopolitical risks involving Iran are likely to persist, that would support WTI to stay above \$60 a barrel, while Brent is expected to stay above \$65 per barrel but below \$70 for the time being," Kim said.

"While a full-scale military conflict remains the least likely scenario, the strong increases for cost of insurance will make for a most costly transportation of crude and see new routes explored, delaying crude arrivals," said Edward Moya, senior market analyst at PANDA in New York.

But a lower 2020 oil demand outlook from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) kept price gains in check. OPEC said the world would need 29.27 million bpd of crude from its 14 members in 2020, down 1.34 million bpd this year.

Asian LNG price steady as global supply still ample

By Jessica Jaganathan

Asian spot prices for liquefied natural gas (LNG) held steady this week, with traders looking for signs of potential demand ahead of winter amid ample supplies.

Spot prices for August delivery to Northeast Asia are estimated to be about \$4.40 per million British thermal units (mmBtu), up 10 cents from last week, trade sources said.

Prices for cargoes delivered in September are estimated to be about \$4.70 per mmBtu, they added.

The weekly price in Asia rose mainly because of higher European gas hub prices, which jumped this week after an unplanned gas outage in Norway, Europe's second biggest gas supplier, and

on higher oil prices, they said.

Gas traders in Europe said fundamentals were nevertheless bearish, with many closely eyeing rising inventories which are far higher than the 5-year average for this time of the year.

Buying interest from Asia remained subdued with stockpiling for winter not expected to start until late September, trade sources said.

In Japan, coal-power stations capable of producing 10,437 megawatts (MW) of electricity will be fired up in the next few weeks, a Reuters survey of the companies shows.

In China, the top buyers of LNG were also largely staying away from the spot market, trade sources said.

Supply on the other hand was ample with Egypt's natural gas company EGAS offering in

the spot market, one source said. Details of the offer were not immediately clear.

Brunei LNG sold a cargo for August loading at about \$4.50 per mmBtu, two sources said, although this could not immediately be confirmed.

Malaysia's Petronas sold a cargo for August delivery at similar price levels, a third source said. The company's spot cargoes from its floating facility Petronas FLNG (PFLNG) Satu facility have been steady since production started in late May, the source added.

Earlier in the week, Angola LNG offered a cargo from its Soyo plant for delivery in late July to August to as far as Singapore.

Russia's Novatek offered a cargo for loading in July or delivery in August into either Europe or Northeast Asia, sources said. If the cargo is



delivered into North Asia, it will be shipped via the Arctic sea route which has just opened for summer, they added.

A Yamal LNG cargo is set to be delivered into Dalian in China on Aug. 17, Refinitiv shipping data showed.

(Source: reuters.com)

Sembcorp pours D 75m in Indian energy arm to push renewables

Singapore-based Sembcorp Industries Ltd (SGX:U96) on Wednesday announced it has made an INR-5.17-billion (D 75.4m/EUR 66.9m) equity investment in its Indian energy subsidiary in a bid to grow its renewable energy business.

According to renewablesnow.com, the company said in a bourse statement it has lifted its stake in Sembcorp Energy India Limited

(SEIL) to 94.05% from 93.73%. The equity infusion saw Sembcorp Industries subscribe for 275 million additional shares in SEIL in a deal that it funded through a mix of internal funds and borrowings.

At present, SEIL owns an over 1.7-GW portfolio of wind and solar assets, including 550 MW in development. In October 2018, it completed a 250-MW wind farm in Tamil

Nadu that was contracted in a tender round held by the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) and is currently working on two other wind schemes secured in nationwide tenders at home.

The shares that Sembcorp does not own in SEIL are held by Sembcorp Utilities Pte Ltd's local partner Gayatri Energy Ventures Pvt Ltd. As previously announced, Sembcorp

postponed SEIL's initial public offering (IPO) in India that was planned to include a fresh issue of up to INR 40.95 billion of shares and up to about 146.8 million shares offered by current shareholders.

The Singaporean firm said last month it will re-file a revised prospectus for the listing at an appropriate time in 2019, depending on market conditions.

Is Shell's latest blockchain venture a game changer?

By Irina Slav

Shell has furthered its stated commitment to cleaner electricity by investing in a U.S startup that has developed a blockchain-based platform for energy sharing.

The startup, LOW3 Energy, said in a press release earlier this week that Shell Ventures and Japanese Sumitomo had made "major investments" in its platform, which "represents a landmark moment for LO3 Energy as we begin to scale our blockchain-based energy networks around the world," according to chief executive Lawrence Orsini.

Blockchain is already making inroads into oil trading: Earlier this year, Total and Chevron joined Shell, BP, Equinor, Mercuria, and Gunvor as shareholders of Vakt, a post-trade processing platform grounded in blockchain and aiming to eliminate the substantial fuss and paperwork around oil trades to reduce transaction times and costs. The platform's owners claim it can drive efficiency and trade finance savings of as much as 30-40%.

Now, the technology that skeptics still believe is more hype than actual substance and usefulness is expanding into utilities. Here's how LO3 explains how its platform works:

"Users set preferences on a dedicated mobile app, choosing how and when to use the local energy resources available to them and allowing them to select the specific sources they



purchase it from. The actual electrons flow through the normal grid transmission network, but the private, permissioned blockchain manages the definition of the energy source and the contract agreement to pay for it. This enables a wide range of business use cases, including peer-to-peer energy trading, energy hedging for businesses, virtual power plants, dynamic electric vehicle charging and demand response."

The project is being deployed

The project is being deployed with partners not just in the U.S. but also in the UK, Colombia, Japan, and Australia. From a certain perspective — the perspective of businesses who want to build a reputation for being environmentally responsible — using an app to select a renewable source of electricity makes perfect sense. From another perspective — the perspective of Shell as bad-reputation Big Oil — it makes even more sense.

Shell has been increasingly active in the electric utilities space: earlier this year the supermajor made headlines by announcing plans it wanted to become the largest power utility globally by 2030.

Bloomberg reported in March the Anglo-Dutch supermajor was pouring \$2 billion annually into its new energies division that aimed to expand its presence in cleaner power generation. This segment could yield returns of between 8 and 12 percent, the head of the new energies unit, Maarten Wetselaar, told Bloomberg.

In light of these plans, any further expansion into the power utility space fits in with Shell's strategy, especially one so focused on facilitating and thus promoting the use of locally sourced renewable energy.

"We see that it's society's ambition to live in a lower-carbon environment," Shell Ventures' investment director Kirk Coburn said as quoted by Forbes' Michael del Castillo in a comment on the LO3 investment. "LO3 is a platform that enables that."

What's more, however, there is a more expansive ambition that would expand renewables' reach and it involves bringing electricity to hundreds of millions currently deprived of it. Taken together, these two ambitions could work to advance Shell's and others' expansion plans for the power utilities industry.

(Source: oilprice.com)

Global Energy Ishares ETF (IXC) sees Schaff indicator continue to climb

By Lisa Richards

Global Energy Ishares ETF (IXC) are in trader's focus this week as the Schaff Trend Cycle indicator has trending higher consistently over the past week. Investors will be watching to see if the price level breaches the overbought signal at 75, which would suggest the strong likelihood of a near-term pullback.

Introduced in 2008 by Douglas Schaff, the concept of the Schaff Trend Cycle (STC) is to identify peaks and lows and predict reversals by running through a cycle oscillator, creating an effective indicator for entry and exit signals, when used in conjunction with additional signals. The STC combines an exponential moving average with slow stochastic to display a signal line that oscillates between two levels on a scale of 0 to 100.

Value investors may be scanning the shelves for bargain stocks. They may be looking to spot those shares that haven't been doing a whole lot and are being generally overlooked by the investing world. Value investors may be searching for stocks with lower price to earnings ratios that possess higher dividend yields.



Investors looking for growth stocks may be willing to shell out a little more for a stock that has the possibility of increasing EPS at a quicker pace. Some investors may favor one category of stocks over another, but they may need to find a combination at some point.

As markets tend to move in cycles, it may be necessary to align the portfolio to the category that is best positioned to make consistent gains in the future.

Deeper look into the technicals

Taking a deeper look into the technicals, at the time of writing, the 14-day ADX for Global Energy Ishares ETF (IXC) is standing at 12.55.

Many chart analysts believe that an ADX reading over 25 would suggest a strong trend. A reading under 20 would suggest no trend, and a reading from 20-25 would suggest that there is no clear trend signal.

The Average Directional Index or ADX. The ADX was created by J. Welles Wilder to help determine how strong a trend is. In general, a rising ADX line means that an existing trend is gaining strength. The opposite would be the case for a falling ADX line.

There are many traders who think that proper psychology is one of the most important aspects of becoming successful in the stock market.

Traders may need to learn how to become confident while overcoming certain fears and dealing with extreme ups and downs. This may not be easy as individuals all draw off of prior experiences at some level.

Being able to convert outside success to the stock market may take some work. Traders who are able to overcome previous bias may be on the right path for having the proper mindset when entering the market.

A can't miss report for anyone investing or thinking about investing in the cannabis industry was just released.

Federal Regulations are on the verge of change, see what that means for the industry and which 5 stocks in particular stand to profit immensely!

Looking further at additional technical indicators we can see that the 14-day Commodity Channel Index (CCI) for Global Energy Ishares ETF (IXC) is sitting at 139.09. CCI is an indicator used in technical analysis that was designed by Donald Lambert.

Finish of market trends

Although it was originally intended for commodity traders to help identify the start and finish of market trends, it is frequently used to analyze stocks as well. A CCI reading closer to +100 may indicate more buying (possibly overbought) and a reading closer to -100 may indicate more selling (possibly oversold).

Moving averages can help spot trends and price reversals. They may also be used to help find support or resistance levels. Moving averages are considered to be lagging indicators meaning that they confirm trends.

A certain stock may be considered to be on an uptrend if trading above a moving average and the average is sloping upward. On the other side, a stock may be considered to be in a downtrend if trading below the moving average and sloping downward.

Shares of Global Energy Ishares ETF (IXC) have a 7-day moving average of 32.33. Taking a glance at the relative strength indicator, we note that the 14-day RSI is currently at 58.00, the 7-day stands at 68.06, and the 3-day is sitting at 88.28.

The Relative Strength Index (RSI) is a momentum oscillator that measures the speed and change of stock price movements. The RSI was developed by J. Welles Wilder, and it oscillates between 0 and 100.

Generally, the RSI is considered to be oversold when it falls below 30 and overbought when it heads above 70. RSI can be used to detect general trends as well as finding divergences and failure swings.

Investors may be trying to define which trends will prevail in the second half of the year. As the markets continue to chug along, investors may be trying to maximize gains and become better positioned for success.

Technical analysts may be studying different historical price and volume data in order to help uncover where the momentum is headed.

Coming up with a solid strategy may take some time, but it might be well worth it in the long run. As we move deeper into the year, investors will be closely tracking the next few earnings periods. They may be trying to project which companies will post positive surprises.

(Source: driscollregister.com)

Peter Jenkins: U.S. pressures unable to make Iran give concessions

TEHRAN (FNA) — Peter Jenkins, former UK Ambassador to the IAEA and UN says that “It is a longstanding feature of US diplomacy that Americans are fervent believers in the application of pressure to coerce negotiating partners into unwilling submission to the US negotiating demands.

Jenkins, a former associate fellow of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, told FNA “what I can say, in the light of my experience, is that it failed in the case of the 12-year diplomatic process that produced the 2015 JCPOA”.

“At no stage did Iran make unwilling concessions as a result of US pressure,” Jenkins told FNA in an exclusive interview.

What follows is FNA’s interview with Ambassador Peter Jenkins. ■ The United States recently imposed new sanctions against senior Iranian officials including the Supreme Leader of Iran and some senior officials of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps. Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was also said to be sanctioned later, too. What could be the purpose behind these sanctions?

A: We all know that the United States government is using sanctions to put pressure on the government of Iran. They call this a “maximum pressure” campaign. I assume, but do not know that they see the sanctions to which your question refers as the latest component in the edifice of sanctions that they are trying to construct.



What do they hope to achieve by raising this edifice? Some of President Trump’s statements imply that he believes not only that the 2015 JCPOA is “a very bad deal” but also that Iran is engaged in a covert nuclear weapons programme – and that his motive in applying sanctions pressure is to coerce the Iranian government into negotiating “a better deal” and halting that programme. Both these beliefs are strange. Almost every other government in the world (but not Israel or Saudi Arabia) believes that the 2015 JCPOA is a good agreement, well-considered and well-balanced. The inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency have never uncovered any evidence that Iran is manufacturing nuclear weapons. But President Trump is a strange man. So perhaps we should not be surprised that he holds strange beliefs.

President Trump’s closest national security adviser, John Bolton, has made no secret of his ambition to destroy the Islamic Republic and put in its place a regime that would be subservient to US wishes. He has received hundreds of thousands of dollars for speaking at meetings organised by the MEK. It seems probable that he has espoused “maximum pressure” as a way of causing so much economic hardship that the Iranian people will rise up and overthrow the Islamic Republic.

Of course, if President Trumps wants to coerce Iran into re-negotiating the 2015 JCPOA, imposing sanctions on Iran’s most experienced nuclear negotiator, the current Foreign Minister, is not the smartest of moves. It points rather to the contradictions and absurdities that have beset US policy towards Iran since 2016.

■ The US State Secretary recently talked about negotiation with Iran without any preconditions in spite of his earlier statements to the opposite. Why do you think he has softened tone?

A: It would be wise to react prudently to this apparent change of position. The current US administration is the most erratic and unreliable of my lifetime. Their foreign policy-making processes are in disarray, if not abeyance. The Secretary of State, no doubt taking a cue from the President, is capable of saying one thing today and something very different tomorrow.

A year ago, Secretary Pompeo laid down 12 conditions for normalising relations between the United States and Iran. These reminded observers with a historical bent of the ultimatum that Austria-Hungary presented to Serbia in July 1914, precipitating a world war in which many millions lost their lives. It may be that Secretary Pompeo has come to realise that there is not the remotest chance of Iran agreeing to those 12 conditions, and that by dropping them he is trying to facilitate the negotiation that President Trump craves. But it cannot be assumed that this is the case.

Even if the “no preconditions offer” turns out to be genuine, an unenviable dilemma will confront the Iranian government. On the one hand it is rarely sensible to allow an adversary to reach a goal by applying pressure, especially illegitimate pressure. On the other hand, if the lifting of sanctions could be achieved by making a few minor concessions that would allow President Trump to boast that he had obtained a far better deal than President Obama, this could be thought a price worth paying. President Trump would not return for more concessions between now and the November 2020 US presidential election, and after that election a more rational US approach to Iran may prevail.

■ The United States talks about negotiations as it is intensifying the sanctions alongside. How can this paradoxical attitude be explained?

A: It is a longstanding feature of US diplomacy that Americans are fervent believers in the application of pressure to coerce negotiating partners into unwilling submission to US negotiating demands. It is often said that Americans seek win-lose outcomes, not win-win outcomes. It would be interesting to explore whether this approach has been successful most of the time, or even more often than not. What I can say, in the light of my experience, is that it failed in the case of the 12-year diplomatic process that produced the 2015 JCPOA. At no stage did Iran make unwilling concessions as a result of US pressure. The JCPOA is a win-win agreement, not a win-lose agreement (perhaps that’s a reason why President Trump thinks so ill of it).

■ Although Trump withdrew the United States from the Iran nuclear deal last year, the suspension of some of Iran’s nuclear deal commitments has caused his discontent. How can this discontent be explained?

A: It can’t be explained rationally. His discontent is irrational. However, it is symptomatic of a US liking for double standards. Time after time Americans demand that the generality of States comply with one standard, while setting a different standard, or no standard at all, for themselves or States like Israel that enjoy a corrupting influence over US policies. I fear this is a failing to which global hegemony is prone. As US power wanes relative to the power of some other States, perhaps Americans will come to attach greater importance to nurturing universal norms of State behaviour, as France and the United Kingdom have done.

Succumbing to U.S. bullying made Ukraine poorest country in Europe: Finnish Analyst

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — A Finnish political economist and author highlighted predicaments of nations that refused to adopt strategies of resistance against US unilateralism, saying Ukraine, for instance, became “the poorest” country in Europe after succumbing to Washington’s bullying.

“Look at Ukraine; they succumbed to USA bullying and propaganda and now their country has become the poorest in Europe although it used to be the industrial powerhouse of the Soviet Union,” Jon Hellevig said in an interview with the Tasnim News Agency.

“And look at Germany, France, and the whole European Union. Subjugated to the USA, they are being ruined with a stagnant economy for more than a decade and deep social and cultural crises,” he added.

Jon Krister Hellevig is a Finnish lawyer and businessman who has worked in Russia since the early 1990s. Hellevig was a candidate in the European parliament election in 2014. He is the managing partner of the Moscow-based law company Hellevig, Klein & Usov. Hellevig has written several books, including Avenir Guide to Russian Taxes (2002, 2003, 2006 English and Russian editions); Avenir Guide to Labor Laws (2002, 2003, 2006 English and Russian editions). Expressions and Interpretations, a book on the philosophy of law and the development of Russian legal practices; Hellevig takes actively part in public discussion of current affairs and social structure contributing with articles and commentary in the media. He regularly lectures at international seminars on various topics.

Following is the full text of the interview:

■ International developments are full of examples of how regional and trans-regional countries have successfully adopted strategies of resistance against oppression and unilateralism that have borne good results. As you know, countries like Iran,



Syria, Yemen, Venezuela, and Palestine have protected their national sovereignty against foreign threats and achieved many gains through this strategy. In contrast, some countries have adopted a strategy of appeasement or reconciliation when being hectorated and bullied by world powers. Given the experiences of these resistance countries, what do you think about their approach and the concept of resistance?

A: Naturally, resistance is the only choice, come what comes. At the same time, the resistance strategy must be smart and strive to build bridges to other countries outside the enemy.

■ Do you think countries that currently toe the line of major powers like the US ought to emulate these experiences of resistance countries to protect their independence and stand against unilateralism?

A: Obviously they should. It’s a question of both the material and moral well-being

of the people and their very existence in the long-term. Look at Ukraine; they succumbed to USA bullying and propaganda and now their country has become the poorest in Europe although it used to be the industrial powerhouse of the Soviet Union. And look at Germany, France, and the whole European Union. Subjugated to the USA, they are being ruined with a stagnant economy for more than a decade and deep social and cultural crises. The traditional way of life of those European countries is rapidly being destroyed with their social structures torn apart. In fact, the very existence of those nations is now at risk.

■ In an op-ed article written for Tasnim, the Secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, Ali Shamkhani, warned the European countries of the risks of inaction regarding the US administration’s unilateral policies, saying the current EU leaders will be held accountable for Europe’s future

challenges. Shamkhani criticized Europe for becoming an unimportant and passive actor that accepts humiliation at the hands of the US and has to live with the destructive effects of Washington’s unilateralism that have affected several international treaties. What is your take on that? Isn’t it better for the EU to stand up to US bullying and unilateralism?

A: The European Union and its main constituent countries are not independent nations as they have been taken over by US-led globalists. Their armies belong to the US umbrella organization NATO, their intelligence services are CIA branches, their media is owned by the globalists, their capitalists are totally at the mercy of the US market and its bullying terms, etc. Given these circumstances, independent-minded politicians do not have a chance to come to power, not in the individual states nor the totally undemocratic European Union.

The problems are fortunately building up in the European Union and with President Trump’s erratic policies the relationship is becoming increasingly fraught. But things must get much worse before the European people will mature to free themselves from the globalist yoke. I am afraid, it will take an enormous financial and economic crisis to bring that about. But this crisis will come for sure, sooner or later. Paradoxically, an attack on Iran might be the final trigger for that. And this is what holds the Americans at bay from Iran, at least for the time being. On the other hand, the US economy is so bad with enormous asset bubbles in every field of the economy, stock markets, housing etc., massive budget and trade deficits and skyrocketing debt. Therefore, there might be some people in the USA who could possibly consider war and ensuing financial crisis as a means to extract the country from those problems, to let everything crash and start the global economy anew from ground zero.

Jahangir Mohammed: Trump playing end game with Palestinians

TEHRAN (FNA) — Jahangir Mohammed, Muslim activist, says the current US Administration has been explicitly taking the side of Israel in the so-called peace talks, leaving no rights to Palestinians to return to their homeland, and pushing them into other Arab countries.

Jahangir Mohammed spoke with FNA in an exclusive interview. He shed light on why the US willingly accepts invasion of the Palestinian lands by Israeli occupiers, saying, “The US itself was built on occupation and dispossession of indigenous people; they stole their land and property and consigned them to camps (reservations), like the Palestinians. So why would they see anything wrong in what invading European Jews have done to Palestine?”

Jahangir Mohammed is the director of the UK-based Center for Muslims Affairs. He has been active in defending Muslims rights around the world. He has extensively written on Muslims’ affairs and violation of their rights.

Below is the full text of the interview.

■ The Trump administration moved the US embassy from Tel Aviv to al-Quds, and recognized Israel’s sovereignty over the Syrian Golan Heights. Also, it sought end to the refugee status for millions of Palestinians by disrupting UNRWA. Do you think if there is any room left for the US to show sincerity as a peace broker?

A: The United States has never been a sincere mediator for the Palestinians. It has been a supporter of the state of Israel since its creation. It has provided billions of dollars of military aid each year to Israel. In 2016 the two countries signed a deal for military aid to Israel over the next 10 years of 38 billion dollars. Many of its negotiators and mediators in the past and now, have either been Christian or Jewish Zionists. There is a huge Christian Zionist movement in the US whose votes their leaders are dependent on, and a strong Israel lobby. For mediators to be successful, they need to be impartial. The US has always been on one side. The only difference now is that

Trump has made it very clear whose side the US is on and is playing the end game with the Palestinians.

■ The US has a history of tearing down international agreements such as the JCPOA. Do you believe Palestinians can trust the US as it is proposing the so-called “deal of century”?

A: The Native Americans once used to say “white man speaks with forked tongue”. This meant that they could not trust the European occupiers, because they broke every agreement, they ever signed with them. The US itself was built on occupation and dispossession of indigenous people; they stole their land and property and consigned them to camps (reservations), like the Palestinians. So why would they see anything wrong in what invading European Jews have done to Palestine? If any Muslim country believes them, they do not understand the history of the US.

It would be naivety of the Palestinians and the Muslims to think they could ever be an impartial peace broker. When they talk about the “deal of the century” they mean it is exactly that for Israel. For the Palestinians it is a surrender agreement. It is the final solution to the Palestine issue in accordance with Israeli and US wishes, which is to deny Palestinians their right to return to their homeland and push them into other Arab states. It is in effect wiping Palestine and Palestinian people off the map. This is exactly the ultimate goal of the Zionist movement from the time of the creation of the State of Israel.

■ Iran and Qatar are the main nations greatly concerned about the future of the Palestinians. There are many more nations that feel the same although their states have been bought or intimidated by the US and Israel into giving up practical support for the oppressed Palestinian nation. How do you think Israel and the US will try to cut off such supports for the Palestinians?

A: There are a number of ways that the US and certain



Persian Gulf states are doing this. Iran has been a main source of support to the Palestinians since its revolution. Qatar has also been a main source of support for the Palestinian people. Persian Gulf States have already isolated Qatar and put pressure on it to break its support. They have labelled Qatar as a supporter of terrorism, just like with Iran. They have sanctioned it, to try to destroy its economy, just like Iran. They are labelling Qatari charities and groups as terrorist and imposing banking sanctions. They are collaborating with neo-con think tanks and activists to produce “evidence” of Qatari support for “terrorism”. The US is trying to force the “deal of the century” on the Arab world and sending their forces to surround Iran who they believe will be the main obstacle and last source of support to the Palestinians.

Throwing a monkey wrench into U.S.-UK ‘Special Relationship’

TEHRAN (FNA) — The times they are a changing, even for the so-called special relationship between the United States and Britain.

The publication of excerpts of secret cables containing vicious attacks against President Donald Trump from British Ambassador to the United States Kim Darroch to the British Foreign Office has really thrown a monkey wrench into the much-touted Anglo-American “special relationship.”

In the cables, which were leaked to the British “Mail on Sunday” newspaper, Darroch said the White House was “uniquely dysfunctional” and that the president’s career could “end in disgrace.” He also said the president’s life had been “mired in scandal” and called Trump “inept” and “incompetent.”

Darroch also described Trump’s calling off an air-strike on Iran because of expected casualties as a move that was solely motivated by mundane political considerations. Trump was not slow in responding to this vicious attack, tweeting “We will no longer deal with him.”

This is not the first time that Trump has had it with the “bloody British.” The origins of “Russiagate” also had a clear British origin, with the “leaks” of former MI6 operative Christopher Steele laying the basis for the propaganda “blitz” that had been conducted on that matter in the US media.

Attorney General William Barr is now investigating the origins of that whole operation, including the role of



Steele in his collaboration with elements of the Democratic National Committee and the FBI.

This could unroll a number of covert operations that the British would prefer kept out of the limelight. Darroch also personally played into the “Russiagate” operation with his comments to the foreign office that the Trump administration was indebted to “dodgy Russians.”

There is no doubt that Darroch’s days in Washington are numbered, but he will no doubt retain a major position in Whitehall for his “loyal and distinguished service”

to “Her Majesty’s Government”. What has been exposed here is not simply a foible by some “rogue diplomat” but reflects the old attitude of the “British Empire” school. For no matter how much they will laud their “special relationship” with the United States, the Brits tend to regard “Yanks” as something of a junior player in a relationship that has often been viewed by them as “British brains and Yankee brawn.”

For all the finesse and affability shown in British diplomacy, the old overbearing haughtiness of the “British Empire” often breaks through, lurking silently under the surface of ole’ John Bull.

Britain maintains a major political influence in the world largely through its “special relationship” with the United States. And if this “relationship” is no more important than the US relationship with China or Russia, or Germany or France for that matter, this is something the British have a hard time swallowing. The relationship has certainly been cast into doubt by Trump.

While Trump continues to claim he will work with the British under “new management,” it is clear that the days of Britain pulling the “Yankee brawn” into new foreign adventures are pretty much at an end. The best that they can hope for is a good working relationship with a president, who has equally important, if not more important, relations with other countries other than his “English cousins.”

Biden is in the midst of fear and hope!

By Saeed Sobhani

TEHRAN — The former vice president of the United States is in a shaky situation. Although Biden is leading in polls from his Democratic rivals, the experience suggests that he can now not identify himself as a definitive victory! If Biden fails in the Iowa state elections (the first Democratic state election), his chances of winning his rivals will be sharply reduced. This is while Joe Biden imagined that his victory in competing with the Democrats would be definitive!

An overview of the latest news and analysis in the United States can help us explain the political situation in the United States.

Biden leads 2020 Democratic race, followed by Warren, Harris and Sanders: NBC/WSJ poll

As CNBC reported, Joe Biden leads the 2020 Democratic presidential primary race, according to the first NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll of the contest.

The former vice president draws the support of 26% of voters nationally who plan to vote in 2020 Democratic nominating contests, the survey released Thursday found. Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., trails him at 19%. Sens. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., and Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., each get 13% of support, according to the poll. South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg rounds out the top five contenders at 7%. Former Rep. Beto O'Rourke and entrepreneur Andrew Yang both garner 2% of support, and no other candidate in the field of about two dozen draws more than 1%.

The survey largely squares with what recent polls have found about the contenders in the race to challenge President Donald Trump next year. While Biden jumped out to a more substantial lead in early polls, surveys suggest a tighter contest after the first Democratic debate last month introduced more voters to the field.

Much can change before Democratic voters start choosing their nominee. The first-in-the-nation Iowa caucus sits about seven months away. Only 12% of respondents to the NBC/WSJ poll say they definitely made up their minds about who they will support next year. Asked about their second choices for president, 14% of respondents chose Harris. She was followed by Warren at 13% and Sanders at 12%. Meanwhile, 10% of respondents picked Biden as their second choice, and 8% chose Buttigieg.

Harris and Warren get strong marks after first debate. The survey was taken after the first Democratic debate in Miami, which appeared to reflect well on Harris and Warren. Nearly half — 47% — of Democratic primary voters who watched at least some of the debates or paid close attention to news coverage of them said Harris most impressed them. About a third responded that Warren impressed them most.

Harris, one of three black candidates in the field, created the debate's most discussed moment when she targeted Biden's record on race and his stance on school busing policy. She told a story about getting bused to school in a newly integrated California school as a child.

The former vice president comfortably leads the field among African-American Democratic primary voters, according to the NBC/WSJ poll. He garners 46% of support, trailed distantly by Harris at 17%. Among non-white primary voters, Biden draws 33% of support, followed by Harris at 16%, Sanders at 15% and Warren at 14%. Biden leads among primary voters who consider themselves moderate or conservative. Warren has an edge over Sanders among liberal respondents.

Do voters want big or small changes?

One core issue that will define the Democratic primary is whether voters want sweeping overhauls or incremental change. For example, Sanders and Warren have backed a single-payer "Medicare for All" system and massive student debt forgiveness. Biden and others have cautioned against Medicare for All or widespread debt cancellation, calling the plans too expensive.

More than half, or 54%, of Democratic primary voters said they want a candidate who "proposes larger scale policies that cost more and might be harder to pass into law, but could bring major change" on issues such as health care, climate change, college affordability and economic opportunity. Meanwhile, 41% responded that they prefer a candidate who "proposes smaller scale policies that cost less and might be easier to pass into law, but will bring less change" on those issues.

Warren leads among respondents who want major change with 29% of support, followed by Sanders at 18%. Both candidates have proposed sweeping overhauls to the political and economic system, and Sanders first gained popularity as a candidate in 2016 by promising a "political revolution." Meanwhile, voters who want smaller tweaks overwhelmingly chose Biden. Among all registered voters, 44% support a single-payer health care system, versus 49% who oppose it.

The poll also questioned voters about whether they back a candidate based more on ideology or their ability to deny Trump a second term in the White House. Among Democrats primary voters, 51% said they want a candidate who comes close to their views on issues. Meanwhile, 45% responded that they want a candidate with the best chance to defeat the president. Out of those who consider beating Trump most important, 34% choose Biden, followed by Warren at 21% and Harris at 16%. Among respondents who say they prefer to agree on issues, Biden and Warren are tied at 18%, while Harris garners 17% of support. The NBC/WSJ poll surveyed 800 total registered voters from July 7-9. More than half of those voters were reached by cell phone. It has an overall margin of error of plus-or-minus 3.5-percentage points. Among the 400 Democratic primary voters surveyed, the margin of error is plus-or-minus 4.9-percentage points.

Biden slams Trump's trade war even as he calls to 'get tough' on China

Former Vice President Joe Biden knocked President Donald Trump's trade policy Thursday even as he argued the U.S. needs to curb China's "abusive" economic behavior. The 2020 Democratic presidential candidate slammed Trump for tariffs on Chinese goods that sparked retaliation from Beijing and pain for American farmers. Still, he called for the U.S. to "get tough on China" — taking a more aggressive stance than he did when he downplayed the threat China



poses earlier this year.

"President Trump may think he's being tough on China. All that he's delivered as a consequence of that is American farmers, manufacturers and consumers losing and paying more," Biden said during a speech outlining his foreign policy plans at the Graduate Center at the City University of New York. "His economic decision-making is so shortsighted and as shortsighted as the rest of his foreign policy."

Biden said the U.S. needs to act to counter China or it will "keep moving and robbing U.S. firms" of technology and intellectual property. But the former vice president — who supported the North American Free Trade Agreement and Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade deals that some of his Democratic rivals oppose — called for "new rules" and "new processes" to craft trade relationships. Biden, who has led most early primary polls, called to "build a united front" of economic partners to hold China accountable.

"China can't afford to ignore half the global economy if we're united. That gives us substantial leverage to shape the future rules of the road on everything from the environment to labor to trade to technology to transparency," Biden said. In a statement, Trump campaign spokeswoman Kayleigh McEnany said the president "has repeatedly advocated for the American worker on the world stage by taking on unfair trade practices across the world." She cited Trump's replacement for NAFTA, called the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, his decision to leave TPP and his China policy. She argued Biden "has a history of blue collar betrayals."

Few Democratic candidates have targeted Trump over his trade policy. But Biden previously slammed him in the key agricultural state of Iowa — which will hold the first Democratic nominating contest in February. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., criticized Biden earlier this year for questioning how much of a threat China posed to the U.S.

Trump's trade conflict with China has raised fears about damage to U.S. businesses, farmers and the broader global economy. Trade is a thorny issue for 2020 Democratic candidates. Contenders such as Sanders and Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., agree with Trump that free trade has harmed American workers and sapped manufacturing jobs.

Biden has typically supported U.S. trade policy. But he said Thursday that "there's no going back to business as usual on trade with me." His comments come as Democrats express reservations about Trump's NAFTA replacement due to concerns about labor and environmental protections and pharmaceutical prices.

The remarks also come as the U.S. scrambles to strike a trade deal with China. The Trump administration has slapped tariffs on \$250 billion in Chinese goods during the ongoing trade war. China has responded with duties on \$110 billion in American products.

Washington and Beijing restarted talks in recent weeks after efforts to strike a deal stalled. But earlier Thursday, Trump said China is "letting us down" by not buying more agricultural products. The Trump administration has considered farm product purchases to be a key part of moving forward with discussions. Biden made the comments Thursday during a broader speech about his foreign policy strategy. He also criticized the president for favorable comments about authoritarian leaders and tweeted threats of military force.

Trump officials warn of 'active threats' to US elections. The Trump administration outlined "active threats" to U.S. elections as it briefed Congress Wednesday on steps the government has taken to improve election security in the wake of Russian interference in 2016.

Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats, FBI Director Christopher Wray and other officials "made it clear there are active threats and they're doing everything they can" to stop them, said Rep. Debbie Dingell, D-Mich. Dingell called the closed-door presentation "very impressive" and said the issue was "one we all need to take seriously."

Coats, Wray and other officials met separately with the House and Senate in classified briefings. Democrats requested the sessions as they press legislation to keep Russia and other foreign adversaries from interfering with the U.S. political system. House Minority Whip Steve Scalise, R-La., called the meeting helpful and said it reinforced the importance of remaining vigilant against outside threats to U.S. elections.

The session demonstrated that federal agencies "continue to learn from the mistakes of the 2016 election, when the (Obama) administration was flat-footed in their response" to Russian interference, Scalise said. Special counsel Robert Mueller laid out details of Russian interference in the 2016

election earlier this year, and lawmakers from both parties have warned that the Russians are likely to try to interfere again in 2020. Democrats say Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has blocked bipartisan bills to address election security, and they pressed for the briefings as a way to force his hand. McConnell, a Kentucky Republican, said he welcomed the briefings. The "smooth and secure execution" of the 2018 midterm elections "was not a coincidence" and showed the success of measures the administration has already taken, he said.

While Congress may need to act, McConnell said he's skeptical of Democratic-passed bills on election security, saying they give too much control over state and local elections to the federal government. Democrats "have twice passed bills aimed at centralizing election administration decisions in the federal government, in part on the hope that election attorneys — not voters — will get to determine the outcome of more elections," McConnell said Wednesday.

A bill approved by the House on a largely party-line vote in late June "would erode long-standing safeguards" that ensure local control of elections, he said. Democrats dispute that and say urgent action is needed to guard against Russian interference in 2020. "We know that nefarious foreign and domestic actors continue to meddle in our democratic systems, and we've been put on notice that previous efforts were only trial runs presumably for our next election in 2020," said Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., the chief sponsor of the House election security bill. Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer of New York said the classified briefing was important but "by no means sufficient."

Congress must "debate and adopt measures to protect our democracy and preserve the sanctity of elections," Schumer said. He accused McConnell of doing "nothing when it comes to one of the greatest threats to our democracy: that a foreign power would reach in and interfere (with U.S. elections) for its own purposes."

The bill approved by the House would require paper ballots in federal elections and authorize \$775 million in grants over the next two years to help states secure their voting systems. It also would prohibit voting systems from being connected to the internet or wireless technologies and tighten standards for private companies that provide election infrastructure.

The bill is among several proposed by Democrats to boost election security as Congress belatedly moves to respond to Russian interference in the presidential election nearly three years ago. The GOP-led Senate is unlikely to vote on the bill. "It's interesting that some of our colleagues across the aisle seem to have already made up their minds before we hear from the experts that a brand-new, sweeping Washington, D.C., intervention is just what the doctor ordered," McConnell said.

Ken Fero: Israel, U.S., benefiting economically through war on Syria

TEHRAN (FNA) — Ken Fero, university professor and filmmaker, says Israel and the US destabilize peace in Syria, as the military-industrial complex, led by the dogs of war in Washington, has an insatiable appetite for blood and oil.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with FNA, Dr. Fero commented on Israel's policies on Syria, and said, "Israel has been duplicitous; it has worked against [Syrian President Bashar] Assad because it knows that Syria will be a weakened state without him in power, but it cannot control what would have happened if the mercenary forces had succeeded."

Dr. Ken Fero is an Associate Professor in the Department of Media at Coventry University. Based in London he is a renowned documentary filmmaker producing work for television and cinema release with a focus on resistance to human rights abuse in Europe. He is an expert on media and human rights and has written and commented extensively on the subject.

Below is the full text of the interview:

■ The recent Israeli strike on Syria was followed by planned attacks by the terrorists. Do you believe there is a link between Israel and terrorists fighting in Syria?

A: Apart from direct military intervention Israel also has a history of arming rouge forces and coordinating attacks on nation states. It did this in Lebanon during the 80' and 90's by being the primary ally of the South Lebanon Army, providing weapons and logistics, thus prolonging a bloody war that suited Tel Aviv after Israel invaded Lebanon in 1978. The arming of mercenary collaborators continues today. Only a few months ago the IDF Chief of Staff Gadi Eisenkot acknowledged that Israel had indeed provided weaponry to Syrian rebel groups in the Golan Heights. The source of the funding for forces that have been trying to destroy Syria, and the coordination of the attacks such as the one on Latakia province, can be laid at the doors of Saudi Arabia with the tacit approval of the United States. With the US being Israel's strongest political ally, as well as the provider of millions of dollars of military aid, it is no surprise that Washington, Tel Aviv and Riyadh are singing from the same song sheet.

■ Israel used to be very careful with its operations over Syria after Russia equipped Damascus with the S-300 missiles system. However, it has apparently resumed strikes on the war-stricken nation. How do interpret present course of events?

A: Israel sees the Golan Heights as the spoils of war. Trumps recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel helped propel the hard-liner Benjamin Netanyahu back into power. Trump went much further than Jerusalem though after private meetings with Netanyahu. He had also declared the Golan Heights, an area that has been occupied illegally by Israel since the defeat of Syria in 1967, as Israeli territory. In fact there were peace negotiations about the Golan between Israel and Syria up until the outbreak of the war in 2011. Since then Israel has done everything in its power to ensure that the war, in which so many Syrians have lost their lives and suffered, becomes an opportunity to expand Israeli territory even further. Israel continues to ignore countless UN Resolutions and does so with the might of the US behind it.

■ Israel has openly said Syrian President Bashar al-Assad must be removed from power. How would Israel benefit from Assad being replaced?

A: President Assad remains in power despite eight years of bloody war waged by Saudi Arabia and the West. The country may be in ruins, but it is still intact. The open calls to oust Assad, which was seen by the West as a pre-condition for peace in Syria, are now diminishing. Israel has been duplicitous, it has worked against Assad because it knows that Syria will be a weakened state without him in power, but it cannot control what would have happened if the mercenary forces had succeeded. It's a fine line. There is no finery, however, in the regular calls by Israeli ministers that there may be a need to 'eliminate' Assad, as one of the outcomes of the war is the strengthening of military ties between Damascus and Tehran. If peace is established in Syria, Tel Aviv will keep meddling in its neighbors' affairs to destabilize the peace in the Arab country. Israel, and the US, benefit economically through conflict in the region and the military-industrial complex, led by the dogs of war in Washington, has an insatiable appetite for blood and oil.

Second Announcement



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The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 9,245 EURO or 241,925,159 RIAL, in favor of NISOC. Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: WWW.nisoc.ir-material procurement management tab. NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

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Falcon has landed: Japan’s Hayabusa2 probe touches down on asteroid

A Japanese spacecraft has successfully landed on a distant asteroid where it hopes to collect samples that could shed light on the evolution of the solar system.

Scientists at the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (Jaxa) observing the landing from a control room on the southern island of Tanegashima applauded and made “V” for victory signs after the Hayabusa2 probe landed on the asteroid on Thursday morning local time.

“The touchdown is successful,” Jaxa spokesman Takayuki Tomobe said.

The agency said the probe had been working normally above Ryugu asteroid, some 300m km (185m miles) from Earth.

Its landing is the second time the probe has touched down on the desolate asteroid as part of a complex mission that has also involved sending rovers and robots.

The mission hopes to collect pristine materials from beneath the surface of the asteroid that could provide insights into what the solar system was like at its birth 4.6bn years ago. The agency said it would be the first time a probe has taken particles from below the surface of an asteroid.

To get at those crucial materials, in April an “impactor” was fired from Hayabusa2 towards Ryugu in a risky process that created a crater on the asteroid’s surface and stirred up material that had not previously been exposed to the atmosphere.

Jaxa said the samples could contain organic materials and water.

“This is the second touchdown, but doing a touchdown is a challenge whether it’s the



first or the second,” Yuichi Tsuda, Hayabusa2 project manager, told reporters ahead of the mission.

“The whole team will do our best so that we’ll be able to complete the operation,” he said.

Hayabusa2’s first touchdown was in February, when it landed briefly on Ryugu and fired 5g pellet at more than 1,050km per hour (650mph) into the asteroid’s surface to puff up dust for collection, before blasting back to its holding position.

Thursday’s second touchdown required special preparations because any problems could have meant the probe lost the precious materials already gathered

during its first landing.

The probe began its descent on Wednesday from its usual stationary position 20km above the asteroid, and is believed to have touched down on a targeted area located about 20 meters from the artificial crater’s center.

During its brief time on the asteroid, Hayabusa2 collected samples from the crater formed in February via a tube that retrieved the unidentified “ejecta” as it floated up.

A photo of the crater taken by Hayabusa2’s camera showed that parts of the asteroid’s surface are covered with materials that are “obviously different” from the rest of the surface, mission manager Makoto Yoshikawa told reporters. “I’m really looking forward

to analyzing these materials.”

Tsuda said: “It would be safe to say that extremely attractive materials are near the crater.”

The probe will return to Earth next year, when scientists hope to learn more about the history of the solar system and even the origin of life from its samples.

At about the size of a large refrigerator and powered by solar panels, Hayabusa2 is the successor to Jaxa’s first asteroid explorer, Hayabusa – Japanese for falcon.

That probe returned with dust samples from a smaller, potato-shaped asteroid in 2010, despite various setbacks during its epic seven-year odyssey and was hailed as a scientific triumph.

Hayabusa2’s photos of Ryugu, which means “Dragon Palace” in Japanese and refers to a castle at the bottom of the ocean in an ancient Japanese tale, show the asteroid has a rough surface full of boulders.

The Hayabusa2 mission was launched in December 2014 at a cost of around 30bn yen (\$270m). It reached its stationary position above Ryugu in June last year after travelling 3.2bn km on an elliptical orbit around the sun for more than three years, according to Kyodo news agency.

If the rest of its historical mission goes to plan, Hayabusa2 will return to its landing site in Woomera, South Australia, at the end of 2020.

In 2005, NASA’s Deep Impact project succeeded in creating an artificial crater on a comet but only for observation purposes.

(Source: The Guardian)

Astronomers spot kilometer-wide asteroid with record-short year

Scientists have identified an asteroid with the shortest known orbital period. The newfound space rock, measuring a kilometer wide, circles the sun once every 151 days.

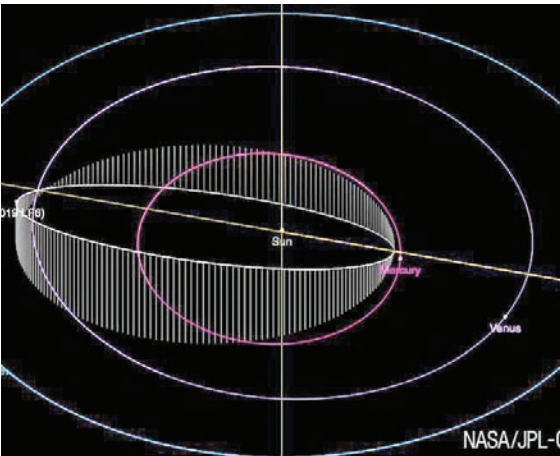
Upon its closest approach to the sun, the asteroid, dubbed 2019 LF6, moves inside Mercury’s orbit. On its aphelion, the portion of the asteroid’s orbit farthest from the sun, 2019 LF6 moves beyond the orbit of Venus.

“You don’t find kilometer-size asteroids very often these days,” Quanzhi Ye, a postdoctoral scholar at the California Institute of Technology, said in a news release.

The discovery was published by the International Astronomical Union’s Minor Planet Center.

The space rock is an interior-Earth object, or Atira asteroid, one of 20 asteroids that orbit the sun inside Earth’s orbit.

“Thirty years ago, people started organizing methodical asteroid searches, finding larger objects first, but now that most of them have been found, the bigger ones are rare



birds,” Ye said. “LF6 is very unusual both in orbit and in size -- its unique orbit explains why such a large asteroid eluded several decades of careful searches.”

Scientists spotted the unusual asteroid using the Zwicky Transient Facility, or ZTF, a powerful camera at the Palomar Observatory, situated in the mountains between Los Angeles and San Diego. The camera system surveys the sky extremely fast, making an ideal tool for finding asteroids.

“We only have about 20 to 30 minutes before sunrise or after sunset to find these asteroids,” Ye said.

The orbital planes of both 2019 LF6 and 2019 AQ3, another Atira asteroid with a short year, are off-kilter from the plane of the solar system.

“This suggests that sometime in the past they were flung out of the plane of the solar system because they came too close to Venus or Mercury,” said Tom Prince, a physics professor at Caltech.

(Source: UPI)

Fossil of 99m-year-old bird with unusually long toes found



The fossilized remains of a bizarre, ancient bird that had middle toes longer than its lower legs have been found in a lump of amber from Myanmar.

The elongated toe resembles those seen on lemurs and tree-climbing lizards, and suggests an unusual lifestyle for some of the earliest birds that lived alongside the dinosaurs, researchers said.

“We have the leg of a little 99-million-year-old bird, preserved in amber, that shows a foot morphology unlike any known previously,” said Jingmai O’Connor, a vertebrate paleontologist and co-author of the study at the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The foot was so distinctive that O’Connor and her team declared the bird, which was probably about the size of a sparrow, a new species, naming it *Elektorornis chenguangi*. The first part of the name translates to “amber bird”. It is the first bird species to be recognized from amber.

The bird’s foot had four toes, with the third measuring 20% longer than the bird’s lower leg bone, and 41% longer than its second toe.

Scientists compared the bird to the only other known species that has such disproportionately long digits: the aye-aye, a type of lemur which uses its elongated fingers to pry larvae and insects out of tree trunks. The researchers believe that *Elektorornis* might have used its toes for similar purposes.

The bird might have spent most of its time in trees rather than in water or on the

ground, the team speculate, developing its longer toes to cling to branches more easily, as seen in tree-climbing lizards.

Along with its unusually long toes, the bird is thought to have sported teeth, and claws on its wings, and it may have had primitive feathers. It lived in a mangrove forest by the sea, alongside lizards, snakes and frogs.

The bird’s leg, discovered in a lump of amber from the Hukawng valley in Myanmar in 2014, was originally thought by traders to belong to a lizard, but O’Connor’s team swiftly identified it as an ancient bird’s foot.

The study of the remains, published in the journal *Current Biology*, involved CT-scanning the amber to produce a 3D reconstruction of the foot. The model was compared with 20 other extinct bird species and 62 extant ones to fully establish its unique form.

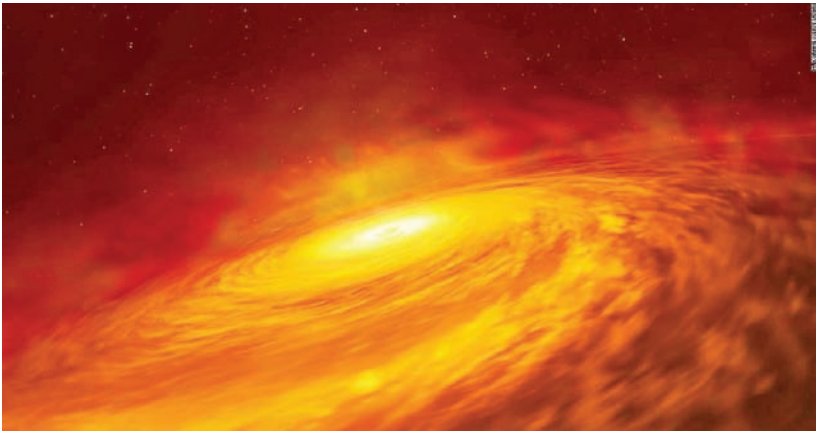
O’Connor said the fossil illustrates the “weird” lifestyle and anatomy of early birds, with the foot only the latest in a flurry of ancient animal remains found in Myanmar amber. Last year another team of scientists found the remains of an ancient proto-spider encased in amber.

The spider had a tail twice as long as its body, which might have been swished from side to side to detect predators.

The Chinese team now hope to study proteins and pigments in feathers found on the surface of the amber in the hope of better understanding how the bird was adapted to its environment, for example by using its feathers for camouflage.

(Source: The Guardian)

Hubble spies something mysterious around a supermassive black hole



There’s something unusual happening at the center of the spiral galaxy NGC 3147, and the Hubble Space Telescope caught a good look.

The galaxy, which is 130 million light-years away, contains a supermassive black hole at its heart, as expected. What wasn’t expected is the thin disc of material around the black hole.

The black hole has a mass 250 million times that of our sun. A study of the black hole and its disc was published Thursday in the *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society Letters*.

The galaxy is active, but it’s a low-luminosity one. This means the black hole at the center should be starving because there isn’t enough material in the galaxy to feed it.

Discs are typically found in extremely active galaxies. It’s a test of Albert Einstein’s theories of relativity, general and special. While general relativity regards gravity as the curvature of space, special explains the relationship between time and space.

And it makes for a great observation opportunity. The disc is deep within the black hole’s gravitational field, which has altered light in a way that astronomers can actually see what’s happening close to the black hole.

“We’ve never seen the effects of both general and special relativity in visible light with this much clarity,” said Marco Chiaberge, senior European Space Agency astronomer at the Space Telescope Science Institute and Johns Hopkins University.

Hubble was able to measure the material in the disc, and astronomers determined

that it’s spinning around the black hole at more than 10% the speed of light.

The velocity causes the gas to appear brighter as it’s moving in the direction of Earth and dimmer as it moves away, which is called relativistic beaming.

Because the gas disc is so deeply embedded in the black hole, the light can’t escape, so it looks stretched.

Hubble’s Imaging Spectrograph instrument was able to take the light and separate it into wavelengths. Those wavelengths help indicate temperature, speed and other information. The instrument was key to looking into the low-luminosity area around the black hole.

At first, the galaxy was selected as a model of lower-luminosity active galaxies with starving black holes, which suggests that discs form only when there is enough gas trapped by a black hole. It was believed that if this happened, a large amount of light would be emitted, which is called a quasar.

“This is an intriguing peek at a disc very close to a black hole, so close that the velocities and the intensity of the gravitational pull are affecting how we see the photons of light,” said Stefano Bianchi, associate professor in the Department of Math and Physics at Università degli Studi Roma Tre in Italy. “The type of disc we see is a scaled-down quasar that we did not expect to exist,” Bianchi explained. “It’s the same type of disc we see in objects that are 1,000 or even 100,000 times more luminous. The predictions of current models for very faint active galaxies clearly failed.”

(Source: CNN)

India prepares to launch Chandrayaan 2 moon mission

India is making final preparations for the launch this Sunday of the Chandrayaan 2 moon mission. The spacecraft will take two months to cruise to the moon. Following its arrival, it will maneuver into a circular orbit just 62 miles (100km) above the lunar surface. It will then deploy the Vikram lander early in September.

This will be India’s first attempt at a soft landing on the moon. If successful, it will make the country the fourth to achieve such a feat, after Russia, the US and China.

The chosen landing site is near the lunar South Pole, where water ice has been detected in some permanently shadowed craters. Once safely down, the Vikram lander will release a small, six-wheeled rover named Pragyan.

The three components of the mission carry a full complement of scientific instruments. Among other things, they will study the moon’s mineral and chemical composition and its topology and seismology.

India’s first moon mission, Chandrayaan 1, launched in October 2008 and operated successfully for almost a year. As part of the mission, an impact probe struck the moon’s South Pole in a controlled manner.

Chandrayaan 2 will launch from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre on India’s south-east coast.

(Source: The Guardian)

Fish sleep just like humans, suggesting we learnt how to nod off some 450m years ago, study finds

Zebrafish sleep just like humans according to new research which suggests the way we snooze evolved more than 450 million years ago.

Scientists say our ancient fish-like ancestors developed “slow-bursting sleep” before crawling out of the ocean.

Although today’s fish are unable to close their eyes (because they lack eyelids), changes in their brains and muscles are the same as those that take place in humans.

Scientists already knew this occurred in mammals, birds and reptiles, but the fact it has been recorded in a zebrafish suggests it is a very ancient adaptation.

“While modern mammals have their first ancestor 70 million years ago, modern fishes derive from ancestors living 450-500 million years ago,” senior author Philippe Mourrain, from Stanford University School of Medicine, told *The Independent*.

“The fact that we find sleep brain and body dynamics similar in both zebrafish and humans strongly suggests that these neural and muscle signatures were already present in our common ancestor more than 450 million years ago.”

Like humans, fish lose muscle tone, their heartbeat drops and they do not respond to stimuli when sleeping. The only real difference is a lack of rapid eye movement during REM sleep, researchers found.

To study the fish, they built a fluorescent light-sheet microscope that could image the whole body in extremely high resolution.

They recorded brain activity as the fish slept and observed heart rate, eye movement and muscle tone, according to the study, published in *Nature*.

Although scientists cannot know for certain that all animals sleep, it appears to be a universal need.

The exact benefits are still a mystery but people who fail to get enough sleep suffer memory lapses and impaired judgment as well as a higher risk of obesity and high blood pressure.

Sleep disorders are also linked with neurological diseases such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s.

“This research is critical as it strengthens the idea sleep has core functions that are conserved throughout animals such as maintenance and remodeling of neuronal connections,” said Dr Mourrain.

Scientists say understanding sleep functions in animals could help us better understand the consequences of sleep disruption.

“Because fishes’ neural signatures are in essence the same as ours, we can use information about them to generate new leads for drug trials,” said Dr Louis Leung, from Stanford University School of Medicine.

Mice – often a stand-in for human research – are nocturnal and a less relevant model for our sleep.

“As zebrafish are diurnal like humans, it’s perhaps more biologically accurate to compare fish sleep with humans’ for some aspects,” Dr Leung said.

(Source: The Independent)

Jet lands in Florida, claiming new aviation records for circling the globe

A team of aviators including retired astronaut Terry Virts landed at Kennedy Space Center Thursday morning, claiming to have set three global flying records for circling the Earth over the North and South poles.

The mission, called One More Orbit, touched down in Florida at 8:12 a.m. EDT, hours ahead of its tentative schedule. Its recorded flight time was 46 hours, 39 minutes, 38 seconds. The average speed was clocked at 534 mph.

That would break the official record for average speed of 511 mph set in 2008, and for total minimum time of just over 54 hours. According to One More Orbit, a third record was set because two women on board, film director Jannicke Mikkelsen and flight attendant Magdalena Starowicz, are apparently the first women to complete a polar circumnavigation of the world.

Officials from the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (World Air Sports Federation) and Guinness World Records are in Florida to verify the records.

The flight came in the 50th anniversary year of the Apollo 11 moon landing, and on the 500th anniversary year since Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan set sail on the first maritime trip around the globe.

Mission captain Hamish Harding told UPI of a harrowing crisis over the South Pole on Wednesday as the plane suddenly encountered air temperature far below its design threshold. Harding was at the controls.

The jet crossed over the pole at just below 0 degrees Fahrenheit, or -18 Celsius, flying at over 40,000 feet high. In an instant, Harding said, the temperature plummeted to -117 Fahrenheit, or -83 Celsius.

(Source: UPI)

Turkish airline to launch direct flights to Tabriz, Isfahan

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — Pegasus Airlines, a Turkish low-cost airline headquartered in Istanbul, is scheduled to launch routes connecting the city of Izmir in Turkey to the cities of Tabriz and Isfahan in Iran, IRNA reported on Friday.



The airline's decision comes at requests of many passengers, the report said, adding that in this regard, weekly chartered flights will be operated during August and September, however, their continuation is still unclear.

Head of the Association of Iranian Travel Agents in February emphasized the need to make a balance in tourist flow rates between the two neighbors.

In January-November 2018, 1.894 million Iranian tourists visited Turkey, 18.17 percent less than the same period in 2017, according to data compiled by Turkey's Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The Islamic Republic, however, has failed to lure Turkish nationals in such a way to attain a balance yet.

South Africa adds Ghana, Sao Tome to visa-free countries list

South Africa on Wednesday announced the addition of seven countries to its list of visa-free list. Of the seven, two were African nations — Ghana and Sao Tome and Principe.

Three were from the Persian Gulf region — Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. New Zealand are the sole South Pacific nation on the list.

Sao Tome and Principe is an island nation in the South Atlantic off the west coast of Africa; achieved independence from Portugal in 1975; has enormous offshore oil reserves.

According to authorities, of the 193 countries who are member states of the United Nations, the South African Department of Home Affairs has granted visa — free status to 75 countries.

Of the latest seven, Ghana and Qatar already had visa on arrival arrangements with South Africa which is Africa's most industrialized nation and an economic giant.

According to the latest Henley Passport Index, South Africans can visit 99 countries around the globe visa-free. The country is also a key tourist destination, a boost for the industry according to authorities.

"The President has announced in the #SONA (state of the nation address) in both February and June that we shall accelerate the implementation of e-visa system. E-visa will make it easier for tourists to visit, and for companies to acquire employees with critical skills.

"It will be an online application with a risk-based adjudication and issuance of your visa electronically as opposed to a hard copy. On receiving the electronic message by email, you just continue straight to your airport and head on to South Africa.

"The problem is not that people must not come to South Africa, but that whoever enters the country must be properly documented. The porous borders make documentation extremely difficult," Minister Aaron Matsoaledi said in an address.

(Source: Africa News)



ROUND THE GLOBE

Land of Frankincense

The Land of Frankincense, which is a World Heritage in Oman, includes the frankincense trees of Wadi Dawkah, the remains of the caravan oasis of Shisr/Wubar, the affiliated ports of Khor Rori and Al-Baleed.

The four components dramatically illustrate the trade in frankincense that flourished in this region for many centuries. They constitute outstanding testimony to the civilizations in south Arabia since the Neolithic.



The successive ports of Khor Rori (4th century BC to the 5th century CE) and Al Baleed (8th century till 16th century CE) and an outpost close to the Great Desert Rub Al Khali, Shisr, about 170 km inland, represent in a unique way the distribution of frankincense which was produced in the wadis of the coastal hinterland.

All three sites were exceptionally fortified. Wadi Dawka is an outstanding example of the growth of the frankincense tree (boswellia sacra) from which the resin was produced, collected and traded.

The port of Khor Rori (the Moscha Limen of classical geographical texts) lies 40 km to the east of Salalah on a hilltop on the eastern bank of a sweet-water outlet (khor). About 400 meters from the open sea, it dominates the khor which opens to the sea and served as a natural harbor.

The remains of the fortress are located on a rocky spur running east-west, forming part of a wider defensive system, details of which are still evident.

(Source: UNESCO)

Crafts exhibit spotlights fusion of nomadic, modern styles

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — A fusion of traditional and modern principles of designs in women's wear and personal ornamentation was in the limelight at an exhibit, which came to end on Friday at Tehran's Niavaran Cultural-Historical Complex.

The three-day event featured works by female breadwinners, nomads and crafters from all over the country, CHTN reported.

The opening ceremony was attended by Vice President for Women's and Family Affairs Masoumeh Ebtekar, Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization Deputy Director Pouya Mahmoudian, and several other officials, arts lovers and established craftspeople.

One of the striking features of the exhibit is that it showcases a wide variety of arts by ethnic minorities in the country, Ebtekar said.

"In this exhibit we are witnessing a successful fusion of Iran's nomadic-traditional style with modern [philosophies]," she said.

Mahmoudian, for her part, said that it



(From left) CHTO deputy director Pouya Mahmoudian and Vice President for Women's and Family Affairs Masoumeh Ebtekar visit an exhibition of traditional women's wear and personal ornamentation at Tehran's Niavaran Cultural-Historical Complex on July 10, 2019.

Turkish company to build vast tourism complex in Kish

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — A Turkish company is going to construct a large tourism complex in Iran's southern island of Kish with making investment as much as \$100 million.

Managing director of Kish Free Zone Organization (KFZO) and managers of "a Turkish company" active in the tourism industry signed a contract for the investment on Wednesday, IRNA reported.

Construction of the complex, measuring 10 hectares, will start soon. It will include 1000 bedrooms equipped with advanced residential facilities for guests, grand reception halls, meeting rooms, a number of restaurants, sports grounds, a waterpark, swimming pools and amusement parts, the report said.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, CEO of the free zone, Gholamhossein Mozaffari, said this huge tourist complex will attract many domestic and foreign visitors to the coral island.

Mozaffari, earlier in March, said that the Persian Gulf island is prepared to host major events both in regional and international scales, saying "With proper environment, coastlines, transport and recreational infrastructures, tourist attractions and suitable sports amenities, Kish Island enjoys high capacity for hosting regional and international events."

The KFZO is in charge of handling the infrastructure affairs, development and economic growth, creating job opportunities, attracting local and foreign investors, regulating the good and labor market and ultimately utilizing the Island's tourist potentials.

Over the past couple of decades, Kish has become a beach resort where visitors can swim, shop and sample a laid-back and relatively liberated local lifestyle. It is home to free-trade-zone status, with ever growing hotels, shopping centers, apartment blocks and retail complexes.



Island cores unravel mysteries of ancient Maltese civilization

The mysteries of an ancient civilization that survived for more than a millennium on the island of Malta—and then collapsed within two generations—have been unraveled by archaeologists who analyzed pollen buried deep within the earth and ancient DNA from skulls and bones.

It's part of a field of work that is expanding the use of archaeological techniques into environments where they were previously thought to be unusable.

The Temple Culture of the Maltese archipelago in the Mediterranean began nearly 6,000 years ago and at its height probably numbered several thousand people—far denser than the people of mainland Europe could manage at the time. The island people constructed elaborate sacred sites, such as the famous Ggantija temple complex, and their buildings are among the earliest free-standing buildings known.

But, after 1,500 years, they were gone.

Professor Caroline Malone, prehistory specialist at Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland, wanted to understand how the



fragile island ecology sustained the people for so long despite drought, violent storms and soil erosion—and why it ultimately failed.

She ran an ambitious project, Fragsus, which drew on multiple tools to find some answers. Scientists drilled earth cores rang-

ing from eight to 30 meters deep, dating the sediment using carbon dating to understand which time period it referred to.

They counted the pollen at 2cm intervals and analyzed individual pollen grains using chemical signatures imprinted by the surrounding environment to understand what nutrients the parent plants were absorbing from the ground. Molluscs embedded in the soil revealed glimpses of the landscape since 'snails are very particular about where they live and don't move far,' said Prof. Malone.

Meanwhile, other specialists assessed the wear and tear on tens of thousands of human bones from a burial site to understand the islanders' lifestyles. The team broke new ground by analyzing bone with a technique called ancient DNA (aDNA) analysis, says Prof. Malone. It had previously been thought that the warmth of any climate south of the Alps would destroy such old DNA. But it turned out that skulls buried at a relatively cool five meters' depth still harbored aDNA within thick bone behind the ear.

(Source: phys.org)

How to actually eat like a local while traveling

By Rebecca Holland

When looking for restaurant recommendations at home, we rely on friends, magazines and review sites. Yet when abroad, we fantasize about a mystical "local," someone who will guide us to the best meal of our lives, preferably somewhere "authentic" and "off the beaten path." Though we would never expect this of a stranger on the street at home, we expect it abroad from citizens just like us.

Chicago, where I live, has a fantastic food scene. That doesn't make every Chicagoan an expert. If you asked 100 random people where to eat, you would receive dozens of different answers.

If we don't expect locals in our own city to be food experts, there's no reason to assume locals everywhere else are.

But if the all-knowing local doesn't exist, and we don't want to resort to overpriced, chain restaurants, how can you actually find the best local food while traveling? Here are some tips.

■ Do your preliminary research

Before you go, do some research on the types of cuisine your destination is known for, its local ingredients and its most beloved dishes. Then do a quick search for places to eat, keeping in mind that review sites aren't always accurate (more on this later). Eater is usually a reliable source, and places like Bon Appétit, Saveur, Roads & Kingdoms, and of course, The New York Times' Food section are all good options that use locals or experienced international journalists who have gone through these steps for you.

Curiosity Magazine, a publication I started specifically to help travelers find their way and get advice like this, hires exclusively local writers eager to share their local food culture with visitors. Local food blogs, which you can often find with a quick Google search, are also great resources. If you see a few places showing up again and again in a variety of publications and sources, that's a good sign.

■ Sign up for a food tour

Food tours are one of my favorite things to do while traveling. They give an outsider a great overview of the must-eats in a city, and are easy to find. Ask your hotel concierge, search the web for vacation packages that include food tours, check with a travel agent, or check with a local or regional tourist office. Sure, the portions are small and you'll wander around amid a group of tourists, but you'll also learn something and try a variety of foods in an effortless way. Most importantly, your guide is a local who obviously loves food. Ask where she eats when not working and you'll get plenty of tips to try once the tour is over.

■ Trust bar and restaurant staff

"Bartenders know best" is my motto for drinking around the world. Bartenders work with and drink with other bartenders, who work and drink in other bars. Whether you're looking for a dive bar or a fancy cocktail, your bartender — whether it's at a hotel bar or a restaurant you stumbled into — will point you in the right direction.

The same goes for your restaurant server, who works all night with people in the food world. The advice from your bar and wait staff is some of the best you'll get. Tip accordingly.

■ Don't (blindly) trust online reviews

I spent a few years living in Rome and was always baffled with some of the top-rated restaurants on sites like TripAdvisor or Yelp. "This is the best pizza I've ever had in my life," someone would write about a mediocre restaurant outside the Vatican, while my favorite (and very popular among locals) pizza spot was way down around No. 200.

But keep in mind that TripAdvisor reviews are written by tourists, not locals. Maybe it is the best pizza that person has ever had, because he's on vacation and atmosphere matters when it comes to taste. That doesn't mean it's the best pizza in Rome. Reviews can help you pin down suggestions in a region, or if you have specific dietary needs or preferences,

but that's about it. If you must read, look past the stars. If someone has given a place a two-star rating because of "a misplaced fork," or something else you know wouldn't be an issue for you, disregard the review. Service speeds, for example, are cultural, and prone to bias. Look for reviews from locals, especially those who comment on certain dishes. "This Bolognese is as good as my grandma's." That's what you're looking for.

Don't shy away from street food, especially when there's a crowd. Street food is usually cheap and widely available, and can give you insight into the local food culture. Just as with hot dogs in Chicago, most people can tell you where to go. However, while street food can be delicious, it can also carry the risk of food-borne illness. Watch how it's prepared and handled, and follow our tips. If you're skeptical — either of the location or the ingredients, or in a country where food-borne illness is a common problem for travelers — don't risk it. If you see lines of locals waiting outside a street cart though, that's a good sign that turnover is high and food is popular and good.

At restaurants, make note of long lines of tourists waiting for the No. one rated place on TripAdvisor, but also look for crowds of locals spilling out into the streets, and eating happily at local restaurants or cafes where the lines are long before the doors even open. There are a few food experiences worth waiting for, but for the most part a comfortably crowded spot beats a long line any day.

■ Ask the right locals, not just any local

If you're going to do it, let's talk about how to do it right. Keep in mind that, especially when visiting a non-western country, American tourists will often be pointed toward the most "western" place, which also tends to be the most expensive. The intentions are often good — avoidance of funky flavors or spice, for example — but the results are often disappointing.

(Source: The New York Times)

Highest breast cancer incidence among women aged 40-49: expert

HEALTH d e s k **TEHRAN** – The highest rate of breast cancer among Iranian women occurs between 40 and 49 years of age, which is lower than the global average, oncologist Nematollah Ros-tami said, Mehr reported on Wednesday.

According to statistics, the prevalence of breast cancer is high amongst Iranian women aged 40 to 49 while the incidence is most common globally in females over the age of 50, he added.

The low age of those suffering from breast cancer, which may result from epidemiological differences as well as late diagnosis, increases the death rate from breast cancer in Iran, he lamented.

The risk factors are genetic mutations, family history of breast cancer, never having a full-term pregnancy, having the first pregnancy after age 30, drinking alcohol, smoking cigarette, obesity and unhealthy diet, he said.

“In early stages, breast cancer may have no signs and be diagnosed using mammography or medical ultrasound. The early diagnosis increases the chance of treatment for patients.”

Breast cancer in Iran growing by 6% every year

In January, Tehran’s Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences announced that the rate of breast cancer in Iran was growing by six percent every year, indicating a sharp rise in the disease’s prevalence.



Every year, 10,500 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in women in the country. The incidence rate of breast cancer is now around 30 in every 100,000 women.

The low age of those suffering from breast cancer, which may result from epidemiological differences as well as late diagnosis, increases the death rate from breast cancer in Iran

According to a recent report published by the population-based cancer registry of the Islamic Republic of Iran, released based on statistics in the Iranian calendar year 1394 (March 2015- March 2016), breast cancer (32.9 percent) is the most common cancers in the country and a total of 12,588 women suffered from breast cancer during the Iranian calendar year 1394.

According to the report, breast cancer rate in women is high in Tehran, Yazd and Semnan provinces.

Breast cancer, most frequent but preventable

According to World Health Organization, breast cancer is the most frequent cancer among women, impacting 2.1 million women each year, and also causes the greatest number of cancer-related deaths among women.

In 2018, it is estimated that 627,000 women died from breast cancer – that is approximately 15 percent of all cancer deaths among women. While breast cancer rates are higher among women in more developed regions, rates are increasing in nearly every region globally.

A person has no control over some of these risk factors, such as family history and genetics. However, there are also a number of lifestyle factors – including alcohol consumption and physical activity levels – that people can change to help reduce their risk of this condition.

‘E-prescribing prevents order of unnecessary medicines’

HEALTH d e s k **TEHRAN** – Through having access to electronic health records of patients, physicians can prescribe more useful medicine, an expert with the Universal Public Health Insurance Scheme (Salamat Health Insurance) said.

Seyyed Reza Pouraghdam said that e-prescribing services provide an opportunity for physicians to check records of patients and the medicine that he or she has previously used for more beneficial prescription.

The electronic system prevents from unnecessary and repetitive prescribing, he added.

The electronic health record (EHR) program– a systematized collection of patient and population electronically-stored health information in a digital format, was launched across the country in late June.

The EHR project is jointly implemented by the ministries of health and ICT, the National Organization for Civil Registration, the Statistical Center, the Health Insurance Organization and the Social Security Organization.



Benefits of e-prescribing

According to the carecloud.com, e-prescribing offers many benefits for all involved from the prescriber in the patient room to the pharmacy employee who hands the patient the prescription.

E-Prescribing gives prescribers full insight into a patient’s previous prescription history at the click of a button.

It would prevent prescription drug errors. By utilizing e-prescribing, both the prescriber and those who handle the prescription along the way can feel assured they have given the patient the correct medication.

With e-prescribing, prescribers can track if patients fill prescriptions, giving physicians the ability to counsel patients on medication management if needed. Prescribers can also follow how often prescriptions of controlled substances are filled to monitor potential drug abuse.

Additionally many e-prescribing software programs make it easy for the prescriber to choose generic medicines which are more likely to be covered by the patient’s insurance. When the patient incurs fewer costs, there is a better chance they will be compliant with the needed drug therapy.

What happens in the brain when we are bored?

What happens in the brains of people who are prone to boredom? New research finds out.

What matters, though, is not just how much time a person spends feeling bored, but also how they react to the state of boredom.

Traditionally, boredom gets a bad rap because many people believe that the state of boredom equates with a lack of productivity or focus on a given task.

However, some research has indicated that it is good to be bored because this state helps boost creativity.

One way or the other, boredom is something we all have experienced repeatedly throughout our lives, and according to some research, it seems that animals might share this experience with us, too.

“Everybody experiences boredom,” says Sammy Perone, who is an assistant professor at Washington State University in Pullman. However, he adds, “some people experience it a lot, which is unhealthy.”

For this reason, Perone and colleagues from Washington State University decided to conduct a study focusing on what boredom looks like in the brain.

The study findings – which now appear in the journal Psychophysiology – might help them identify the best ways of coping with boredom so that this state does not end up affecting mental health.

At the end of the day, “we wanted to look at how to deal with [boredom] effectively,” Perone explains.

The study premises

To begin with, the research team believed there was a “hard-wiring” difference in the brains of people who react negatively to boredom vs. those individuals who experience no ill effects when they are bored.

However, initial tests – using electroencephalogram (EEG) caps to measure participants’ brain activity – proved them wrong.

“Previously, we thought people who react more negatively to boredom would have specific brain waves prior to being bored. But in our baseline tests, we couldn’t differentiate the brain waves. It was only when they were in a state of boredom that the difference surfaced,” Perone explains.

So, if there was no difference in terms of brain hardwiring, then what could explain why boredom affected some people more adversely than others? The researchers decided that the most likely explanation was individual response: some people simply reacted poorly to being bored, which could affect their well-being.

Previous research, the investigators report in their study paper, has actually suggested that individuals who are often bored are also more prone to poor mental health, and particularly to conditions such as anxiety and depression.

“People who report high levels of boredom propensity have an avoidant disposition. For example, these individuals are more likely to experience depression and anxiety,” the researchers write.

Based on these premises, the researchers argue that it is possible to find ways of coping with states of boredom so that they become less likely to affect mental health. But what might these strategies be? Before they could find out, Perone and team had to solve another mystery, namely what boredom looks like in the brain.

In other words, proactive thinking could be a good way of coping with boredom. The trick, however, is getting individuals to learn how to do more of this, and succumb to boredom less.

“The results of this paper show that reacting more positively to boredom is possible. Now we want to find out the best tools we can give people to cope positively with being bored,” explains Perone.

(Source: Medical News Today)

‘Excessive use of computer, cellphone causes spinal damage’

HEALTH d e s k **TEHRAN** – The spinal cord can be damaged by excessive use of digital equipment, such as computers and cellphones, which also leads to lack of physical activity, the deputy director of Tehran province’s association of physiotherapy said, Mehr reported on Wednesday.

Homayoun Abaei added that the machine-based lifestyle increases the musculoskeletal disorders and diseases.

“The high usage of cellphones and computers and the lack of physical activity in the society leads to muscle weakness and obesity, which contributes to different problems.”

Effect of computer, smartphone use on muscle fatigue

According to an article published by NCBI on the effect of duration of smartphone use on muscle fatigue and pain caused by forward head posture in adults, working on computers and operating smartphones for long periods of time promote repetitive use of certain muscles, resulting in muscle fiber injury, cumulative damage from acute trauma, and myogenic tonus, which occur most often in the neck and shoulders.

Repetitive and cumulative trauma to the neck and shoulder causes forward head posture (FHP), a specific musculoskeletal abnormality. FHP weakens the deep cervical flexor muscle, the midthoracic rhomboid muscle for scapular retraction, and the mid and lower trapezius muscles. FHP also shortens the pectoralis major and neck extension muscles. Upper trapezius muscle activity is increased more in FHP than in correct anatomic positions, and most patients complain of pain from muscle overuse.

Smartphone use in a static position and with an unsupported arm could bring about abnormal alignment of the neck and shoulders. Because smartphones have small monitors that are typically held downward near the laps, users must bend their heads to see the screens, increasing activity in the neck extensor muscles overloading the neck and shoulders increases muscle fatigue, decreases work capacity and affects the musculoskeletal system.

There are a number of studies on posture and motion with computer, laptop and smartphones use. However, studies are lacking on appropriate durations of use. This study aimed



to investigate the effect of the duration of smartphone use in adults with FHP and the onset of fatigue and pain in neck and shoulder muscles.

Things you must know about detoxes

Detoxes, sometimes referred to as “cleanses”, have maintained their popularity as a health trend for years. Devotees claim they help rid the body of toxins and give your digestive system a much-needed break. The intended results are feeling younger, healthier, and more energized.

Detoxes typically fall under one of three umbrellas:

- Those that replace foods with liquids
- Those that claim to support your body’s natural detoxification process
- Those that “cleanse” your digestive tract via the colon

“Detoxes are advertised as a means to rid the body of excess toxins, rest the digestion and immune systems, and restart [your] metabolism,” says Ashley Reaver, an Oakland, CA–based dietitian and founder of My Weekly Eats.

An unrealistic goal

The goal of a detox is to flush out the toxins that our bodies come in contact with every day – be it the toxins in the air, the food we eat, or the products we use. This is typically done by fasting, drastically restricting food intake, replacing solid foods with liquids, or drinking a ton of water – all of which could have negative side effects on your health.

“Unfortunately, detoxes don’t [fulfill] any of these claims,” she says.

The truth is, there’s no evidence these detoxes, cleanses, or resets can actually improve your health – and because some of them are so restrictive, they may actually be doing more harm than good.

Still, you may have read blogs and articles that use scientific jargon to try to validate detoxes. So, we’re here to debunk the most common and popular detoxes.

Juice or smoothie cleanse

These liquid-only cleanses, which are arguably the most popular, replace solid foods with a selection of fruit- and vegetable-based juices or smoothies. Typically, juice and smoothie cleanses last anywhere between 3 and 21 days – although some people go much longer.

There are tons of companies out there that sell these kinds of cleanses. You can also buy juices and smoothies from a specialized shop or make them at home.

Drinking fruit- and vegetable-based juices – as long as they’re fresh-pressed – and smoothies can definitely be healthy. These drinks are often packed with nutrients, especially if they go heavy on the veggies, and can be a great addition to your diet.

But drinking only juices and smoothies and depriving your body of actual food is where this detox veers into unhealthy territory.

“Typically, [liquid] detoxes remove the majority of protein and fat from the diet,” says Reaver.

Not only does the lack of protein and fat mean you’ll spend your entire detox feeling hungry, but it can also lead to a host of other negative side effects.

“These detoxes can lead to low blood sugar, brain fog, decreased productivity, and fatigue,” Reaver adds.

Though some people claim that there’s a difference between a detox and a cleanse, it’s difficult to differentiate between



the diets because neither method has a standard, scientific definition. There’s also significant overlap.

Liver detox

Another hot trend in the cleanse world is what’s called “liver detoxes.” The aim of a liver detox is to deliver a boost to the body’s detoxifying system by improving liver function.

While this sounds like a great idea – it’s never a bad idea to eat a diet that supports healthy liver function – you don’t need a formal “detox” in order to do so.

“Fortunately, the liver is well-equipped to handle the toxins that we’re most commonly exposed to,” says Reaver.

“Instead of a ‘detox’ [...] people should [focus on] eating a diet that’s rich in both raw and cooked fruits and vegetables; includes soluble fiber like beans, nuts, and grains; and limits alcohol intake. These are the essential building blocks that’ll allow your liver to operate at peak function.”

Food restriction

Another form of detox are ones that restrict certain foods or food groups as a way to flush the body of toxins and improve overall health.

Restricting or eliminating certain foods in your diet can be helpful under certain circumstances and if you do it the right way.

“Some people benefit from a cleanse because it removes food groups that may cause them discomfort, like gluten or dairy,” says Reaver.

The key, however, is to be strategic in your restriction.

“Instead of eliminating most foods, try to remove a type of food for a week and see if you feel better,” explains Reaver.

“Then, add the food back in and monitor your symptoms. If bloating, gas, intestinal discomfort, constipation, or diarrhea return, then it may be a good idea to remove that food group from your diet.”

However, eliminating too many foods or whole food groups at once, like some food cleanses require you to do, will not only feel overly restrictive, it also won’t give you any insight into what foods are negatively impacting your health.

If you suspect you might have food sensitivities, the elimination diet could help. It might be best, however, to try this diet while under the supervision of a doctor.

16,000 classrooms require reconstruction in Tehran

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Over 16,000 classrooms in Tehran’s educational buildings must undergo efficient measures of demolishing and reconstructing, head of Tehran’s Department of Education has said.

Educational buildings and schools in the capital are similar to those in Sistan-Baluchestan province, some of which are beyond repair and the vulnerable ones should be retrofitted, Abdolreza Fooladvand said.



“There is also a high density of students in the capital city of Tehran which exceeds the average student population rate of the whole country,” he added, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

Despite of the average capacity of classrooms accommodating 24 students, the number of students in Tehran surpasses the average; at least 8 students more per classroom, he lamented.

“Undoubtedly, the high density of students in classrooms more than the standard capacity affects the quality of education even resulting in social harms, which is one of the most important issues that must be taken into consideration,” he explained.

He went on to conclude that this year (started March 21), there has been a significant increase in budget for renovation of schools, however, special attention should be paid to Tehran in order to provide required classrooms.

Earlier in June, Ali Shahri, director of the organization for renovation of Tehran schools, said that there is a shortage of 12,000 classrooms in the capital which will increase to 18,000 over the next few years.

In December 2018, Mehrollah Rakhshanimehr, director of the organization for renovation, development and equipment of schools, said that there were some 107,000 schools nationwide with 530,000 classes, 160,000 of which dilapidated, not meeting safety standards.

Turtles born at key breeding ground will all be turned female by climate change, study predicts

Loggerhead turtles born at a key breeding ground in Cape Verde will all be turned female because of climate change; a new study has warned.

Even under a low emissions scenario, 99.86 per cent of hatchlings would be female by 2100, researchers at the University of Exeter said.

If emissions continue unabated then more than 90 per cent could be incubated at “lethally high temperatures”, killing youngsters before they hatch.

Cape Verde has one of the largest nesting populations of loggerhead turtles in the world, with around 15 per cent of the global nesting total. The sex of turtles is determined by the temperatures at which they are incubated and warm temperatures favor females.

Scientists looked at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) temperature projections for 2100 – low (1.8°C), mid (2.8°C) and high (3.4°C).

Currently 84 per cent of hatchlings at Cape Verde are female, according to their paper published in the journal Marine Ecology Progress Series. Warmer temperatures are set to dramatically increase this.

(Source: The Independent)

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Turning the desert green

(January 18, 2001)
BBC News Correspondent Caroline Hawley reports from Cairo on the project of the millennium. Toshka, as it’s known, aims to create a vast new habitable area for Egypt’s expanding population. President Mubarak has described Toshka as the project of the Millennium, and it’s an undertaking of **Pharaonic scale**. Giant posters depict the Egyptian leader standing in **lush green fields**, and Toshka has even had a brand of cigarette named after it. The official in charge of the scheme, Dia al-Qoosy, says **barren desert** will be made economically productive, providing jobs, creating exports and **relieving the pressure** on Egypt’s cities by enticing people away from the overcrowded banks of the Nile. Water -- the project’s **key ingredient** -- will come from the massive artificial lake created by the Aswan High Dam. A giant pumping-station is due to be opened in Toshka late next year and the government and private investors are already **experimenting with what crops might be grown there**.

But as officials celebrate the fourth anniversary of the project with a concert and ministerial visits, critics are **concerned** it’ll prove a colossal waste of money. Some say the whole concept of trying to populate and cultivate a remote area of **baking desert** is flawed. There are concerns, too, that Toshka’s **environmental impact** hasn’t been properly **thought through**.

Words

Pharaonic scale: this compares the size of the project to the size of the pyramids and temples that were built in ancient Egypt.
lush green fields: fields that have very healthy grass or plants growing
barren desert: soil of such poor quality that plants cannot grow on it
relieving the pressure: lowering the number of people who live in the City so making life easier for those who remain.

key ingredient: the most important part of the situation.

experimenting with what crops might be grown there: a scientific test to discover what plants such as wheat and potatoes can be grown.

concerned: worried about the issue.

the whole concept: all the different parts of the idea.

baking desert: a large and very hot area of land where there is very little water.

environmental impact: the effects on the surrounding area, in which people and animals live.

thought through: people have not considered all the implications of what might happen.

Carbureted motorcycles main source of ozone pollutants in Tehran

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Following consistent ozone pollution in Tehran’s hot season, motorcycles running on carbureted engines are considered as the main contributors to air pollution, Khabar-online reported on Wednesday.

Ozone in the lower atmosphere is formed by the reaction of sunlight on air containing hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides (NOX) that react to form ozone directly at the source of the pollution namely, cars, industry, gas vapors, chemical solvents, fuel combustion.

Although the concentration of other pollutants in the capital has decreased since the beginning of spring (March 21) compared to the same period last year, however, during the third month of spring, ozone reached up to a level which was unprecedented in the past 17 years.

According to the Air Quality Control Company, Tehran’s air was unhealthy for sensitive groups for 17 days during this month, and polluted air for all the citizens haunted the capital for 1 day.

The statistics show a concentration of ozone increases in the capital during summer heats.

In fact, polluted summer phenomenon has haunted the metropolis of Tehran since 3 years ago which has been compounded this year.

Last year, Tehraners experienced 15 days of polluted air quality contaminated by ozone, thus, this was much less compared to the previous years.

Diesel cars and carbureted motorcycles are the major sources generating NOx; therefore, solutions are required to reduce the number of these vehicles in order to mitigate ozone.

Currently, some 2.5 million motorcycles are plying Tehran streets, of which some 2.4 million are carbureted equipped, and some 1.5 million are extremely old emitting particles.



According to WHO, 9 out of 10 people now breathe polluted air, which kills 7 million people every year. The health effects of air pollution are serious – one third of deaths from stroke, lung cancer and heart disease are due to air pollution.

On the other words, carbureted motorcycles account for 96.7 percent of all motorcycles running in the capital, while 61.8 percent of which are clunker playing a vital role in ozone pollution raise.

According to the clean air law, no license plate for carbureted-engine motorcycle should be issued unless a clunker carbureted motorcycle is scrapped, Hossein Shahidzadeh, caretaker for Tehran Air Quality Control Company said.

The clean air law constituting 35 articles has been drawn up by the Department of Environment as an integrated approach to

curb air pollution, which was passed by the parliament on July 16, 2017. The law singles out inefficient vehicles, substandard fuels, industrial activities, and dust storms as the major sources of air pollution in the country and tasks different organizations with specific actions in line with the objective.

“Carbureted motorcycles scrapping process has awaited implementation in recent years due to executive and legal problems as well as increased unemployment,” Shahidzadeh noted.

He went on to say that fuel injection must replace carburetors on motorcycles due to

Injured blunt-nosed viper survived death

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — Macrovipera lebetina, the biggest viper subspecies in Iran, which have been wounded by a stray dog has undergone surgery and survived death, Tasnim news agency reported.

Macrovipera lebetina, also known as blunt-nosed viper, Lebetine viper, Levant viper, is a venomous viper subspecies endemic to Asia, but found in North Africa, much of the Middle East, and as far east as Pakistan. Five subspecies are currently recognized.

Lebetine vipers are endangered. The species is listed as strictly protected (Appendix II) under the Berne Convention.



Following severe injuries after conflict with a stray dog, the viper has undergone surgery by the Iranian veterans and escaped death, the report added.

The viper is still under control being provided with the necessary treatments, but will fully recover after a year.

Snow algae found in ‘ice spires’ could suggest there is alien life on Pluto

Snow algae has been discovered in high-altitude ice spires in the remote Andes Mountains in a possible sign that alien life could thrive on Pluto.

The microbes were found in Chile near Llullaillaco, the world’s second-highest volcano. It is one of the harshest environments on Earth, home to extreme winds, temperature fluctuations and high ultraviolet radiation exposure.

The dramatic ice spires, or penitentes, are pinnacle-shaped structures that can grow up to 15ft in height and are only found at high elevations in the dry Andes. They have been discovered on Pluto and are speculated to also exist on Europa, one of Jupiter’s moons.

New research published in Arctic, Antarctic, and Alpine Research details the first signs of life found in this type of extreme environment.

Biologist at the University of Colorado Boulder noted red colouration - a telltale sign of microbial activity - in penitente fields 16,000ft above sea level. Upon bringing back samples for analysis, the researchers confirmed the presence of two algal species in the ice, the first documentation of any life forms in such an environment.

Steve Schmidt, a professor of microbial and co-author



of the study, said: “We’re generally interested in the adaptations of organisms to extreme environments. This could be a good place to look for upper limits of life.”

According to researchers, these spires provide shelter for microbes by providing a source of water in an otherwise arid and nutrient-poor environment.

Dr Schmidt said: “This is a very remote area that’s difficult

First specialized center for persons with disabilities to be set up in Tehran

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The first specialized center offering full time care and treatment services to persons suffering from disabilities will be launched in Tehran, IRNA reported on Thursday.

The center stretching to 10,000 square meters will be inaugurated in District 22, which has the capacity of keeping 200 patients, the project manager, Mohammad Mehdi Mahmoodi said.

“It will support female patients aged 4-14 who are mentally or physically disabled,” he added.

The construction costs are provided by benefactors, he highlighted.

Those who are either orphaned or whose



parents are financially struggling are in priority to receive services at the care center, he further explained.

“Specialized services and advanced therapeutic and medical equipment will be offered in this center,” he concluded.

to access. The entire back of one of our pickup trucks had to be filled with barrels of drinking water. It’s no trivial thing to go out there, and that’s one of the reasons these formations haven’t been studied much.”

Lara Vimercati, lead author of the study and a doctoral researcher at the University of Colorado Boulder, added: “Snow algae have been commonly found throughout the cryosphere on both ice and snow patches, but our finding demonstrated their presence for the first time at the extreme elevation of a hyper-arid site.

“Interestingly, most of the snow algae found at this site are closely related to other known snow algae from alpine and polar environments.”

The name “penitente” comes from the Spanish word meaning “penitent one” and comes from their resemblance to a procession of monks in white robes doing penance.

They form in snowfields subject to a unique combination of high radiation, low humidity, and dry winds.

Ms Vimercati said: “Our study shows how no matter how challenging the environmental conditions, life finds a way when there is availability of liquid water.”

(Source: The Independent)

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ع

Alborz province sinks 29cm annually, NCC warns

Iran’s National Cartographic Center (NCC) has warned that northcentral Alborz province, adjacent to Tehran, is suffering from land subsidence by an annual rate of 29 centimeters, which must be tackled before incurring great loss, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“a-, ac-, ad-, af-, ag-, al-, an-, ap-, as-, at-”

■ **Meaning:** to or towards

■ **For example:** Change your **address** in the records.

PHRASAL VERB

Pack somebody off

■ **Meaning:** to send someone to stay somewhere for a period of time

■ **For example:** My parents used to pack us off to camp every summer.

IDIOM

Cry wolf

■ **Explanation:** to call for help when you are not really in danger. As a result, nobody believes you when you really need help.

■ **For example:** There's Mary screaming again! Does she really have a problem or is she just crying wolf again?

Berri: Israel seeks to create ‘new Shebaa’ in the sea

TEHRAN — Speaker Nabih Berri Friday said Israel was seeking to create a new Shebaa Farms scenario in a southern maritime area that is the subject of U.S.-mediated negotiations between Lebanon and Israel.

“Israel wants to create a new Shebaa Farms, but this time in the sea,” Berri told visitors to his Ain el-Tineh residence, in the latest sign that the mediation efforts led by senior U.S. official David Satterfield have hit stumbling blocks.

The Shebaa Farms are a southern piece of territory occupied by Israel since 1967, parts of which are claimed by Lebanon. Lebanon has said that Israel’s 2000 withdrawal from the country after 18 years of occupation was incomplete due to its retention of the Shebaa Farms.

“Lebanon has for five years been engaged in difficult negotiations and its position has remained the same,” Berri said, referring to successive bouts of ultimately unsuccessful U.S.-led efforts to find a solution to the maritime border dispute. “Political battles with the [Israeli] enemy are no less dangerous or

important than military battles.”

According to Daily Star, Israel’s energy minister, Yuval Steinitz, earlier this month voiced frustration over what he described as Lebanon’s failure to agree to talks, which he on June 19 had said he expected to take place within a month.

He claimed Beirut was under “the sway of fear from Hezbollah.”

Meanwhile Berri, a key Hezbollah ally, has said that Israel was reneging on conditions it had previously agreed to.

Both countries have sought to demarcate the southern border, where some 856 square kilometers of waters are disputed, as they look to develop oil and gas extraction.

Lebanon is set to begin exploratory drilling by late 2019 or early 2020, and plans to drill in southern Block 9, a sliver of which falls into the disputed maritime territory, in December of next year.

Lebanon has insisted that any demarcation of its sea boundary with Israel go forward only as part of a wider package including the land border. Israel has previously ruled this out.



South Africa to deploy army to quell violent crime in Cape Town

TEHRAN — South Africa will shortly deploy a battalion of soldiers to help police quell a surge in violence in gang-infested parts of Cape Town, a step normally only taken over the Christmas and New Year period when crime spikes in the city’s poorer neighborhoods.

Recent bloodshed in mainly poor black and colored mixed-race areas was likened to a “war zone” by a provincial official this week, with some 2,000 people killed since January.

Communities in those districts often bear the brunt of violence in a vast area called the Cape Flats, where high rates of unemployment and drug abuse have

fuelled gang activity.

“The South African National Defense Force will deploy a battalion with support elements during Operation PROSPER,” the defense ministry said in a statement Friday.

The deployment of several hundred soldiers to unidentified crime hotspots will happen from July to October. It follows a visit by Police Minister Bheki Cele to the Philippi shanty town on the Cape Flats after several murders last week.

In a crime last Friday which made national headlines, six women between the ages of 18 and 26 were murdered when unknown gunmen entered a home and opened fire, Reuters reported.

India prepares to land rover on moon in global space race

TEHRAN — India is looking to take a giant leap in its space program and solidify its place among the world’s spacefaring nations with its second unmanned mission to the moon, this one aimed at landing a rover near the unexplored south pole.

The Indian Space Research Organization plans to launch a spacecraft using homegrown technology Monday, and it is scheduled to touch down on the moon Sept. 6 or 7. The \$141 million Chandrayaan-2 mission will analyze minerals, map the moon’s surface and search for water.

It will “boldly go where no country has

ever gone before,” ISRO said in a statement.

With India poised to become the world’s fifth-largest economy, the ardently nationalist government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is eager to show off the country’s prowess in security and technology.

India successfully test-fired an anti-satellite weapon in March, which Modi said demonstrated the country’s capacity as a space power alongside the United States, Russia and China. India also plans to send humans into space by 2022, becoming only the fourth nation to do so.

The country’s ambitions are playing out amid a resurgent space race, AP reported.

First shipment of Russian S-400 systems delivered to Turkey

TEHRAN — The first shipment of the Russian S-400 missile system has arrived in Turkey, according to the Turkish defence ministry, moving the NATO member closer to a new standoff with the United States.

The ministry said in a statement on Friday that “the first group of equipment” of the advanced air defence systems had been delivered to the Murted airbase outside the capital, Ankara.

“The delivery of parts belonging to the system will continue in the coming days,” Turkey’s defence industry directorate said separately.

“Once the system is completely ready, it will begin to be used in a way determined by the relevant authorities.”

Al Jazeera’s Sinem Koseoglu, reporting from Istanbul, said: “As far as we have been told, the systems will be operational by October 2019.”

She added that the delivery crossed a red line set by the U.S.

“This is the point where the spat between Turkey and the U.S. intensifies, because Washington says even the S-400 arriving in Turkey is a matter of U.S. sanctions,” she said.

■ U.S.-Turkey standoff

The U.S. has strongly urged Turkey to pull back from

the deal - the first such move between a NATO member and Russia - warning Ankara that it will face economic sanctions under the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act if it goes ahead with the purchase, reportedly costing more than \$2bn

Washington has also said Turkey will not be allowed to participate in the programme to produce hi-tech F-35 fighter jets.

The U.S. has repeatedly said that the Russian system is incompatible with NATO systems and is a threat to the F-35. Afzal Ashraf, professor of conflict security at the University of Nottingham in the UK, told Al Jazeera that the situation was “a very significant political concern.”

“This is the first time a major [NATO] member has taken a weapons system from Russia. It’s a political statement that the U.S. doesn’t have a hegemony and control over NATO members and particularly over Turkey,” Ashraf said.

“In military terms, it is an advantage of the U.S. to have access to the Russian systems within the NATO armory to understand the way the system works and deploy countermeasures against it,” he said.

Sanctions would mark a new low in the already-tense relations between Turkey and the U.S. Last year, the U.S.



imposed sanctions on Turkey over its detention of an American pastor, triggering a Turkish currency crisis. The sanctions were later lifted upon the pastor’s release.

The deal with Russia has also raised concerns in Western circles that Turkey is drifting closer to Moscow’s sphere of influence.

Ankara has refused to bow to U.S. pressure, insisting that choosing which defence equipment to buy is a matter of national sovereignty.

India’s BJP to revive Hindu settlement plan in Kashmir

TEHRAN — India’s ruling party will revive a plan to build secure camps to resettle scores of Hindus in the Muslim-dominated Kashmir Valley, a senior leader said, a proposal that would almost certainly heighten tensions in the restive region.

Ram Madhav, who is the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national general secretary responsible for Kashmir, said his Hindu nationalist party was committed to helping bring back some of the estimated 200,000-300,000 Hindus who fled the Kashmir Valley in the aftermath

of an armed revolt that began in 1989.

The scenic mountain region is divided between India, which rules the populous Kashmir Valley and the Hindu-dominated Jammu region, and territory in the west that is controlled by Pakistan. The rival nations both claim the region in full.

“Their fundamental rights of returning to the valley have to be respected. At the same time, we have to provide them proper security,” Madhav was quoted as saying in an interview with Reuters news agency, re-

ferring to the Kashmiri Hindus, also known as Pandits.

Nearly seven million people live in the Kashmir Valley, 97 percent of them Muslim, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of Indian troops and armed police deployed to quell an uprising against New Delhi’s rule. About 50,000 people have been killed in the conflict in the last three decades, according to official figures.

Madhav said that a previous BJP-backed government in Jammu and Kashmir state

had considered building either separate or mixed resettlement townships, but had been unable to make headway. “No consensus could be built around any one view,” he said.

The construction of segregated enclaves has little or no support from the region’s local political parties, Muslim leadership and groups representing the Hindus who fled.

India’s federal home ministry, which would be involved in any such building activity in the Kashmir Valley, did not respond to a request for comment, Al Jazeera reported.

Saudis ‘deeply disappointed’ by UAE drawdown in Yemen

TEHRAN — The United Arab Emirates has pulled most of its forces from the Yemen “quagmire” in a “face-saving” decision that has deeply upset its Saudi allies. The New York Times has said.

UAE officials have been saying for several weeks that they have begun a phased and partial withdrawal of forces, estimated at 5,000 troops a few years ago.

However, significant reduction has already occurred, the Times quoted Western and Arab diplomats briefed on the drawdown as saying.

Over the past month, the UAE has cut its deployment around the strategic Red Sea port of Hudaydah by 80 percent to fewer than 150 men, according to people briefed on the drawdown. They have pulled out their attack helicopters and heavy guns, effectively precluding a military advance on the city.

The UAE, according to a senior Emirati official, says the drawdown is intended to support a shaky United Nations-brokered ceasefire in Hudaydah that came into effect in December.

The drawdown, the Times said, is “a belated recognition that a grinding war that has killed thousands of civilians and turned Yemen into a humanitarian disaster is no longer winnable.”

The Associated Press also quoted experts as saying



that the troop drawdown aims to restore the Persian Gulf country’s reputation, even though it may strain ties with Saudi Arabia at a time of heightened tensions with Iran.

“The Emiratis are driven mostly by their desire to exit a war whose cost has become too high, even if it means angering their Saudi allies,” the New York Times said.

War ‘a failure’

The paper quoted Mike Hindmarsh, a retired Australian

major general who commands the Emirati presidential guard, recently telling Western visitors that Yemen had become a quagmire where the Houthis were the “Yemeni Viet Cong.”

The drawdown “is going to expose the Saudis to the reality that this war is a failure,” said Michael Stephens of the Royal United Services Institute, a research group in London.

“It tells us the two main protagonists on the coalition side, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, don’t have the same idea of what success looks like,” he told the Times. According to diplomats, the Saudis were “deeply disappointed” by the Emirati decision.

“Top officials with the royal court personally intervened with the Emirati leaders to try to dissuade them from the drawdown,” a Western diplomat familiar with the matter was quoted as saying.

The Emiratis have avoided publicly announcing their decision in part to minimize the unhappiness of the Saudis, said several people briefed by the Emiratis.

According to Press TV, Tensions between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi — yet to play out in full display — could have major consequences for the Saudi-led coalition, which has for more than four years been fighting a war it hoped to finish in a matter of weeks.

Has Trump fulfilled his campaign promises?

➔1 NATO’s new command post in U.S., led by Trump, is tasked to coordinate and carry out navy and aerial missions in the Atlantic Ocean and all over the world.

■ Trump and the immigrants

Up to now, millions of people in different U.S. cities took to the streets to protest against Trump’s new strict immigration rules. The protesters chanted slogans such as “all Americans are immigrants”, “building walls is against freedom” and “immigrants are not criminals.”

Trump is the only American president who has categorized illegal immigration as a crime. By his orders, many mothers were separated from their children; these mothers were put in prison while their children were held in captivity in separate cells. Many American citizens and the United Nations condemned these actions and called them pure cruelty.

■ Building a war at Mexico border

The wall that Trump had promised to build at U.S.-Mexico borders has cost \$33 billion by now, and it is not yet built. In next few months, Trump will enter the 2020 presidential campaign and he will not get a chance to build this wall as democrats are against spending more money on the wall.

■ JCPOA

By leaving JCPOA, Trump did not succeed to solve U.S. nuclear issues with Iran; on the contrary, it fuelled the tensions and proved to the world and the United Nations that U.S. is nothing but an untrustworthy liar.

Trump’s team thought that if U.S. leaves the JCPOA, Iran will also immediately leave the agreement and will be drilled by UN Security Council while U.S. sits back and calmly watches the process; however, the results were the reverse; Europe, Russia and China who were the main buyers of Iran’s oil, did not approve of U.S. Unilateral withdrawal from the JPOA and criticized U.S. for its uncustomary behaviors.

■ U.S. and the Islamic Republic of Iran

Trump is drowning in the pool of mistakes that his top security advisors, such as John Bolton, made in regard to Iran.

Bolton was going to celebrate his victory in Tehran in the 40th anniversary of Islamic Republic of Iran’s revolution, little did he know that U.S. military will face a big challenge against the strong will of Iranian people and the country’s powerful military.

Trump’s military and security advisors made fundamental mistakes in dealing with Iran, after their plans for an armed conflict with Iran came to a dead end, they tried to cover up their failure by ending “war threats” and switched into an “obstructive strategy.”

Their obstructive strategy could not restraint Iran either. U.S. next plan was to publish some pictures of the ships and tankers that were damaged over the explosions in Fujairah to prove that Iran was behind the attacks; however, the pictures were so unclear that were met with contempt of all different countries and international entities.

Over UN Security Council’s meeting on the vessel attacks near Fujairah, U.S. did all it could to point the fingers at Iran, but it failed to do so. U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres, condemned attacking unimilitary ships, but said that the evidence about the attack must be examined separately and they cannot simply establish a research committee to look into the matter.

Russia also reacted quickly and asked the member states not to rush into any decision about the attacks.

U.S. psychological war against Iran has not had any effect on the world countries. Even U.S. allies in Europe did not trust U.S. claims and blamed the country for its fierce policies.

Only one state hid behind U.S., Britain who is now a loser in politics. Over the last four years, two British administrations fell apart without solving the Brexit problem. The country is now in totally unstable and is trying to divert attention from its own problems by hiding under the shadows of U.S.

Trump’s security and military advisors were going to run their plans by causing chaos in the Persian Gulf, but all their plans went wrong and U.S. top officials in the country’s National Security Council admitted their failure in running their obstructive strategies in the Middle East.

In the third and last part of its security strategies, U.S. stopped war threats and obstructive strategies and came up with a new play saying that “attacking the oil tankers is a universal problem” and there must be “an international consensus against Iran” to ensure maritime security. It seems that Trump’s security advisors wasted billions of dollars on military deployments near Iran, running obstructive plans and buying Boeing B-52 Stratofortress and other jet fighters.

The phrase “international consensus against Iran” means how U.S. has retreated from his former plans, it is good news for all Iranian citizens and the armed forces because it means that U.S. has failed in crushing Iran and launching its military plans against the country.

Sudan’s ruling military council says coup attempt foiled

TEHRAN — Sudan’s ruling military council (TMC) says it has foiled an attempted military coup and at least 16 officers have been arrested.

The development late on Thursday came as the TMC and protest movement leaders seeking a transition to democracy were in discussions over a power-sharing deal.

“Officers and soldiers from the army and National Intelligence and Security Service, some of them retired, were trying to carry out a coup,” General Jamal Omar of the TMC said in a statement broadcast live on state television.

“The regular forces were able to foil the attempt,” he said, but did not say when the attempt was made.

“This is an attempt to block the agreement which has been reached by the Transitional Military Council and the Alliance for Freedom and Change that aims to open the road for Sudanese people to achieve their demands,” Omar said, referring to the leading protest coalition.

Omar said security forces were pursuing additional officers who took part in plotting the attempted coup.

The announcement came as the generals and protest leaders went through the details of the agreement at a luxury hotel in the capital, Khartoum.

No more details were immediately available.

The two sides agreed last week on a joint sovereign council that will rule for three years while elections are organized.

Both sides say a diplomatic push by allies was key to ending a standoff that raised fears of civil war.

David Shinn, former deputy chief of mission at US embassy in Sudan, told Al Jazeera that the coup attempt was not “too surprising”.

Former England striker Crouch announces retirement

Former England striker Peter Crouch announced on Friday his retirement from football after more than two decades as a professional.

The 38-year-old former Tottenham Hotspur, Liverpool and Stoke City striker spent last season at Burnley but his contract ended last month.

Crouch was capped 42 times by England between 2005 and 2010, scoring 22 goals and appearing at two World Cups, while he reached the Champions League final and won the FA Cup at Liverpool.

"If you told me at 17 I'd play in World Cups, get to a Champions League final, win the FA Cup and get 100 Premier League goals, I would have avoided you at all costs," he wrote on Twitter .

"It's been an absolute dream come true. Our wonderful game has given me everything. I'm so thankful to everyone who helped me get there and helped me stay there for so long."

Crouch had hoped to continue his playing career but said he had found it difficult to accept a bit-part role.

"My ambition was to play until I was 40, so it is scary saying the word 'retirement'," he wrote in a column for The Daily Mail.

"To go from being a regular starter to someone whose role is limited to 10 or 15 minutes off the bench has been hard to accept.

"I will be 39 in January but I am physically fit and could have carried on. What I didn't want to be was someone who was thrown on to have balls smashed up to them."

(Source: Mirror)

Liverpool's transfer window will not be 'biggest' - Klopp

Liverpool will not have a busy transfer window ahead of the new Premier League season, with fit-again Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain and teenager Rhian Brewster set to compete for starting places, manager Juergen Klopp has said.

Midfielder Oxlade-Chamberlain played only two matches last season due to a serious knee injury as Liverpool finished second behind Manchester City in the league but went on to win the Champions League by defeating Tottenham Hotspur in the final.

Brewster is yet to make his competitive debut but the 19-year-old reminded Klopp of his abilities with a brace in a 6-0 pre-season friendly win at Tranmere Rovers on Thursday.

"We brought them in already, only you don't realise it," Klopp told reporters when asked about potential signings.

"Brewster, Oxlade-Chamberlain didn't play last year. All the young boys today ... they're all new players for us."

Liverpool signed 17-year-old defender Sepp van den Berg from Dutch top division side PEC Zwolle last month while Danny Ings, Daniel Sturridge and Alberto Moreno have left the club.

"The transfer market is open until Aug. 8 ... we will see what we do but I don't think it will be the biggest transfer window of all time," Klopp added.

Klopp reserved special praise for Brewster following the match at Prenton Park, saying the youngster had an important role in the new campaign which kicks off with a home match against promoted Norwich City on Aug. 9.

"Rhian Brewster is a top striker ... I'm really happy. He has an important role this year, but how important? It depends on him and we'll see," the German added.

(Source: Reuters)

Cricket fans warned over World Cup tickets on unofficial websites

Cricket World Cup chiefs on Friday warned fans wishing to attend the final at Lord's between England and New Zealand against paying thousands of pounds on secondary ticket websites.

England trounced Australia by eight wickets to seal their spot in the final, where they will be looking to clinch their first global 50-over title.

The prospect of witnessing the host nation make history has led to a frenzied demand for tickets, with some put up for sale on unofficial resale platforms.

The cost of many of the tickets exceed £1,000 (\$1,250) while some are upwards of £5,000.

The International Cricket Council reiterated its stance that it is "actively monitoring and taking action" against those trying to sell on secondary platforms.

Cricket's governing body warned it can "cancel the accounts and tickets we see being sold on secondary sites" and that the only way supporters can guarantee a ticket is through the official resale site.

(Source: CNN)

Barca sign Griezmann after paying clause

Barcelona have signed Antoine Griezmann after they deposited the Atletico Madrid forward's €120 million buyout clause with La Liga.

Griezmann, 28, is expected to arrive in Barcelona over the weekend, where he will pen a five-year contract with the Spanish champions before joining preseason training next week. The deal also includes an €800m release clause.

The France international becomes Barca's third signing of the summer, following the arrivals of Frenkie de Jong and Neto. Griezmann's release clause dropped from €200m on July 1 and sources told ESPN FC at the time that the Blaugrana were working on a deal for the attacker.

However, they delayed triggering the clause immediately in the hope they could negotiate a deal with Atletico which would allow them to pay the fee in instalments. The two clubs met in Madrid last Thursday but it quickly became apparent that Atletico would not accept a payment plan.

After Barca president Josep Maria Bartomeu confirmed the meeting had taken place, the Rojiblancos released a strongly worded statement criticising both Barca and Griezmann's actions.

(Source: Soccernet)

Calm before the storm? Halep stands between Serena and Court landmark



Serena Williams's place among the legends of tennis is assured but her mission will not be accomplished unless she at least equals Margaret Court's record haul of 24 Grand Slam singles titles.

The 37-year-old American gets a third chance in a year to go level with the controversial Australian when she plays another former world number one Simona Halep in the Wimbledon final on Saturday.

Aside from the one-on-one rivalry on court, both women have a member of the royal family rooting for them -- Williams's friend Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, and Halep favouring Kate, Duchess of Cambridge.

Williams will hope for a happier ending than being out-played both by Angelique Kerber in last year's Wimbledon final and Naomi Osaka in the US Open final where a spectacular meltdown torpedoed her cause, leading her to eventually consult a therapist.

Williams claimed after her semi-final romp over unseeded Czech Barbora Strycova that the Court landmark is not on her mind.

"I thought about it this morning," she said. "I actually didn't think about it since because it's really not about 24 or 23 or 25."

"It's really just about going out there and giving my best effort no matter what.

"No matter what I do, I will always have a great career. I just kind of let it go this morning. I feel really calm about it."

Her claiming to be calm -- she attributes this to digging into her memory and recalling how she felt when she beat sister Venus in 2002 for her first Wimbledon title -- will reassure her coach Patrick Mouratoglou.

The 49-year-old Frenchman is more forthright over the reason why Williams

has returned to the tour after giving birth to her daughter Olympia.

It is chasing down 76-year-old Court's landmark set between 1960 and 1973.

■ 'Stronger mentally'

"That's why she came back to playing tennis after having a baby and so many medical complications," he said.

"The effort she's put in, I've never seen something like this.

"You have no idea how hard she worked to come back to that level, and she came back for that, so it will probably mean a lot if she makes it."

Williams's campaign has been something of a rollercoaster.

Sublime against Strycova -- who had ousted four seeds on her way to the semi-finals -- she wobbled badly against compatriot Alison



Riske in the previous round.

Calmness was not the adjective to describe her emotions during the Riske match and even she admits her serenity on Thursday could be replaced by a contrasting demeanour come Saturday.

"It's a day-to-day basis with me," she said. "We all know that. I'm far from perfect."

Halep, the first Romanian woman to play in the Wimbledon final, has the weaponry to upset Williams.

However, she will want her serve to be more reliable than it was in the early stages of her ultimately easy semi-final win over Elina Svitolina.

The 27-year-old has won just one of the four Grand Slam finals in which she has appeared -- last year's French Open.

But she has shown already she can deal

with a partisan crowd having beaten 15-year-old Coco Gauff on Monday.

The size of the challenge confronting her is reflected in having won just one of her 10 previous meetings with Williams, although she has regularly taken her to three sets.

"I believe that I have my chance to win against her," said Halep.

"Of course, I respect a lot what she has done and what she's doing. But now I feel stronger mentally facing her.

"We will see what is going to happen. It's just a big challenge for me."

However, for Halep it is not about being the latest player to deny Williams equalling Court's landmark.

"I'm desperate to win Wimbledon more than to stop her."

(Source: AFP)

German tennis legend Boris Becker auction exceeds expectations



An auction to settle part of Boris Becker's bankruptcy has raised nearly £700,000, with hundreds of bidders taking part. Trustees auctioning the items said they capitalized on the tennis season, especially Wimbledon.

An online auction of dozens of trophies and other memorabilia belonging to German tennis legend Boris Becker ended on Thursday with the items fetching £687,000 (£764,000, \$860,000).

Mark Ford of the London-based firm Smith and Williamson, the lead trustee to Becker's bankruptcy estate, said the items fetched higher bids than a similar attempt last year that was cut short.

"We are pleased to announce that it has come to a close with the total bids significantly exceeding last year," Ford said. "The bids received show the enduring appeal Mr. Becker has with the public and supports the trustees' decision to postpone the auction last year and to hold it again this year during the grass court tennis season."

Last year, an attempt to auction off the memorabilia was blocked when Becker, a six-time Grand Slam winner, claimed diplomatic immunity for his alleged appointment as the Central African Republic's

sports attaché to the EU.

■ 'Celebrated hero'

Becker's memorabilia drew in 495 bidders from across 32 countries. Ford said some of the bidders were attending the Wimbledon tennis championships.

Berlin businessman Christian Krawinkel announced that he had spent more than €490,000 (\$550,000) in acquiring a majority of the trophies and memorabilia at the auction, including Germany's Bambi "Man of the Year" award for his 1985 Wimbledon win.

"I myself have had some experience with the greed of certain financial institutions and flippant offers from dubious financiers during a period of my life and consider it outrageous that the life's work of a celebrated national hero of sport is tattered," said Krawinkel in a statement.

Krawinkel said he plans to propose an arrangement with Becker so he can regain the memorabilia.

Becker is known for being one of the best tennis players of his generation, after he won the 1985 Wimbledon men's title at the age of 17.

(Source: DW)

Westbrook reunites with Harden after stunning trade



The NBA's frenetic movement this summer shows no sign of slowing down, following Russell Westbrook's trade to the Houston Rockets.

The Oklahoma City Thunder decided to go into rebuild mode after trading Paul George to the LA Clippers in exchange for Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, Danilo Gallinari and five first-round picks, as well as pick swaps in 2023 and 2025. Now, they have added to their collection with what they received for Westbrook as the Rockets sent Chris Paul, first-round picks in 2024 and 2016, and pick swaps in 2021 and 2025 for the 2017 MVP.

Daryl Morey, the Rockets' general manager, is known for making bold moves to improve the team, and combining the MVPs from 2017 and 2018 in Westbrook and James Harden is one way of looking to compete with the likes of the LA Clippers and LA Lakers next year in the Western Conference. They will not be short of offensive potential either, with Harden (11,958 points) and Westbrook (10,025 points) being the NBA's two highest scorers over the last five seasons.

What the move also does is reunite Westbrook and Harden. The two guards played together for three years at the Thunder, alongside Kevin Durant, as they were one of the most talented teams in the NBA. They reached the NBA Finals in 2011/12 but ultimately lost to LeBron James and Dwyane Wade's Miami Heat in five games, with Harden departing that summer for Houston. In Texas, the 29-year-old blossomed as the move enabled him to go from being a sixth man of the year candidate to an MVP. It will be interesting to see how the two mesh together, given Harden's growth since the two were teammates at OKC.

It was reported that the Heat had discussed a trade for Westbrook with the Thunder, however it was the 30-year-old who wanted the move to Houston.

The Rockets have seen their odds of winning next year's NBA championship improve after the trade, going from 10-1 to 7-1, as they instantly became the fourth favourite, only behind the Lakers (7-2), Clippers (4-1) and Milwaukee Bucks (9-2).

(Source: Marca)

Shops looted, woman dead in France after Algeria football win

Shops in central Paris were looted and a woman was killed in a high-speed car crash in southern France in what the government slammed Friday as "unacceptable" unrest following a key victory for Algeria's national football team.

Fans of the Algerian team flocked to the Champs-Elysees in central Paris and the Vieux Port area in Marseille late Thursday after their side defeated Ivory Coast on penalties to reach the semi-finals of the Africa Cup of Nations.

Two stores near the Champs-Elysees in Paris were looted, including a Ducati motorcycle shop where people took helmets, gloves and even bikes, an AFP journalist said.

Police used tear gas to disperse thousands of people who had gathered in Paris. The same measures were used to scatter crowds in Marseille.

"The damage and incidents last night on the sidelines of the celebrations... are unacceptable," Interior Minister Christophe Castaner said in a tweet.

"I hail the actions of the security forces in Paris and across the country to maintain order and contain the excesses," he added.

In total, 73 people were detained, the interior ministry said. Forty of the detentions came in Paris, where 10 minors were also detained.

■ 'Organised theft'

Tourists and locals passing through affected area in central Paris Friday morning were confronted with shards of



broken glass on the streets.

An employee of the Ducati shop said the ransacking of the shop was the second such episode in half a year after it was plundered by yellow vest anti-government protesters on December 1.

Paris' top police official Didier Lallement visited the scene Friday, saying it was time that "this kind of irresponsible behaviour stops".

"As on December 1, what we have seen is organised theft, destruction and intolerable looting. We will continue to fight very strongly against this," he added.

In the southern city of Montpellier, an Algerian football supporter celebrating his team's win lost control of his car and ran over a family, killing a woman and seriously injuring her baby, a security official said.

The 21-year-old man was driving at high speed, the official said. The driver was taken into police custody.

The woman was walking with her one-year-old baby and 17-year-old daughter when the accident happened.

The baby suffered traumatic injuries and was rushed to hospital. The 17-year-old had a slight ankle injury.

Algeria, the favourites in this year's Africa Cup of Nations, defeated Ivory Coast 4-3 on penalties in the Egyptian city of Suez to set up a semi-final showdown with Nigeria.

Paris and Marseille are home to large minority communities of Algerian origin. Football celebrations, with supporters brandishing large national flags, have on occasion been a source of tensions.

The far-right National Rally party said in a statement the incidents marked a "rejection of France" and urged authorities to ban access to the Champs-Elysees for the Algeria-Nigeria match on Sunday evening.

The mayor of Paris' 17th district near where the violence took place, Geoffrey Boulard, said that it "appears there was a security problem yesterday night" and added he had been told measures would be reinforced for Sunday's match.

(Source: France 24)

Karim Ansarifard signs for Qatar's Al-Sailiya club

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian **d e s k** international forward Karim Ansarifard has completed a permanent move from Nottingham Forest to Qatari side Al-Sailiya.

The Iranian has left the English Championship side after less than a year, putting pen to paper on a two-year deal.

Ansarifard joined Forest last November as a free agent, following the cancellation of his contract with Greek football team Olympiacos, [nottinghampost.com](#) reported.

He went on to make 12 appearances in the team, though only three of those came as part of the starting XI.

He found the back of the net twice, once in the 3-0 home victory over Hull City in March and then bagging the only goal of the game at QPR a month later.

The 29-year-old missed part of last season as he was called up by his country for the AFC Asian Cup in January, and also found himself down the pecking order in the battle for a first-team place.



He was previously linked with Scottish giants Rangers, as well as Hamburg, in Germany, and Turkish team Besiktas this summer.

Announcing Ansarifard's arrival, Al-Sailiya said the move came after a "period of negotiations".

They added: "The player was hired on the recommendations of team coach Sami Trabelsi, who sees the right player for the team and (who) is able to provide the strong technical addition in the line of the attack in the new season."

Forest head coach Sabri Lamouchi is quickly starting to put his stamp on his squad ahead of the new Championship season.

The Reds have taken their total number of additions to six, and have also seen Hillal Soudani and Apostolos Vellios leave.

Out-of-favour quartet Michael Hefele, Daryl Murphy, Liam Bridcutt and Luke Steele have also been told they are free to find other clubs.

Sohrab Moradi out of IWF World Championships



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Olympic **d e s k** gold medalist Sohrab Moradi is not able to participate at the 2019 International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) World Championships after suffering a shoulder injury in training.

The world competition will be held in Pattaya, Thailand from September 16 to 25.

Moradi, who broke weightlifting's longest standing world record on his way to gold in the men's 94kg class at the 2018

Asian Games, suffered a spinal cord injury in February.

He lifted 189kg in the opening discipline to better the snatch record set at 188kg in 1999 by Greece's Akakios Kakiasvilis.

Now, Moradi is facing a fresh injury in five months.

Moradi, who won a gold medal in the men's 94kg category at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, suffered a shoulder dislocation in training and underwent surgery.

Bakhtiar Rahmani joins Qatari club Al Shamal



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian **d e s k** football midfielder Bakhtiar Rahmani joined Qatari football club Al Shamal on Friday.

Rahmani has penned a one-year contract with the Qatari second tier football club for an undisclosed fee.

Rahmani started his football career in Foolad in 2007 and played nine years for the Ahvaz based football club.

The 27-year-old has also played in Trac-

tor Sazi, Esteghlal, Sepahan and Zob Ahan.

Rahmani has played for the Iran national football teams in all ranks.

He won Iran Professional League with Foolad in 2013-14 season.

Al Shamal SC are a Qatari multi-sports club based in Madinat ash Shamal.

Al Shamal were founded in 1980. The football team currently compete in the second tier of Qatari football, the Qatar-gas League.

Abe moves to Barcelona

Kashima Antlers confirmed on Friday that Hiroki Abe is transferring to Spanish champions FC Barcelona.

The 20-year-old forward, who has been with the reigning Asian champions since 2017, will make his first move to the European continent and will be hoping to feature in the La Liga and UEFA Champions League.

Abe has shown tremendous talent for both club and the Japanese national team. Last year, he played a crucial role in assisting Kashima to their first AFC Champions League title, while also impressing domestically in the J1 League to be named the Rookie of the Year.

Abe first donned the Samurai Blue jersey for the U-19 squad in 2017, before going on to compete in the AFC U-19 Championship Finals the following year, where Japan finished as semi-finalists.



His progress impressed head coach Hajime Moriyasu, who included him in the Japanese senior team for their recent Copa America campaign in Brazil.

"I spent a few months in high school and two and a half years at Kashima Antlers, and I was able to grow as a professional player," Abe said.

"To the staff, teammates and supporters, it was my pride and fortune to fight for victory with all the Antlers family.

"It was a difficult decision to leave the team this season, I felt strongly that I wanted to try new challenges in Barcelona, and I decided to move, and I believe that the various difficulties I will face from now on are absolutely necessary for my growth."

(Source: the-afc)

Turkish coach eyes Iran league title

Turkish coach Mustafa Denizli is targeting Iran's top-tier Persian Gulf Pro League title this season with his new team, Tractor Football Club.

"I hope we will break new ground for this club," Denizli, 69, told Anadolu Agency on Wednesday as he eyes Tractor FC's first-ever league title.

Denizli said that he wanted "a new challenge" so he chose Iran.

"Iran is a country that I love. I wanted a new challenge. So I came to a new club with high expectations," he added.

Tractor FC appointed Denizli in June 2019 for a year as his contract with another Iranian club, Tabriz, will end in June 2020.

He said the club currently needs new signings due to departures.

"We have to sign new players. Four or five players left the club," he said, adding that the club could take on as many as three foreign players.

Only three foreign players can play per Iranian club, he explained.

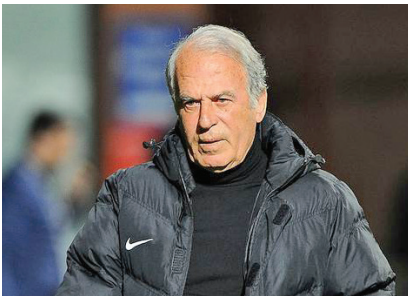
He also praised Tractor FC fans' great interest and enthusiasm.

Denizli said both he and Tabriz, the club's hometown, are thrilled over this season, as they want to take the club's first-ever league title.

Tractor FC was founded in 1970, taking its name from a tractor plant in Tabriz, a northwestern city.

They won the Iran Hazfi Cup in 2014, the only trophy in the club's history.

The fans are very loyal to the team, as



the average home attendance is 60,000.

Tractor FC play their home games at Yadegar-e Emam Stadium, which has a spectator capacity of nearly 67,000, including 50,000 seats.

Last season Tractor FC finished the league

in fifth place. Persepolis won the Iranian championship.

This is Denizli's third spell in Iran, as he previously coached Persepolis FC and Pas Teheran.

He last managed a Turkish Spor Toto Super Lig team, Kasimpasa, but stepped down in May.

During his career, Denizli scored Super Lig titles with the "big three" Istanbul teams: Galatasaray (1988), Fenerbahce (2001), and Besiktas (2009).

Denizli also managed Turkey's national team during the UEFA Euro 2000 co-hosted by the Netherlands and Belgium.

In that tournament, Turkey reached the quarterfinals but were eliminated by Portugal.

(Source: Anadolu Agency)

Young Zob Ahan will be ready for Al Ittihad, says Mansourian

Zob Ahan FC head coach Alireza Mansourian expects a tough challenge but is confident the Islamic Republic of Iran side will overcome Saudi Arabia's Al Ittihad in the 2019 AFC Champions League Round of 16.

Zob Ahan, who are in pre-season training, will face Al Ittihad on August 5 and 13 and Mansourian said his players are working hard to ensure they will be ready.

It will be a changed Zob Ahan side from the one that played in the 2018 AFC Champions League with several players having departed and new faces brought in.

"We have been focusing on fitness and strength training. We are working very hard to be in perfect condition for the match against Al Ittihad," said Mansourian.

Neither team would have kicked off their 2019-20 domestic campaign ahead of the 2019 AFC Champions

League tie and Mansourian said this had made pre-season training even more crucial.

Mansourian, who was the Iranian U23 boss in 2011, said several friendlies and training camps have been lined up to hone the competitive edge of his team.

"We do have a lot of friendly matches planned, and have six mini-camps in Isfahan.

"We have invited other teams to come to Isfahan. Our last mini-camp will be held in southern Iran, with weather similar to Dubai and Doha."

The Round of 16 tie will be played in neutral venues with the first leg in Dubai.

Zob Ahan are desperate to prolong their 2019 AFC Champions League journey after becoming the only Iranian club to advance to the knockout stage, emerg-

ing Group A winners with a record of three wins and three draws.

Their domestic campaign, however, ended with them sixth in the Iran Pro League and out of the 2020 AFC Champions League.

Mansourian admitted that Al Ittihad - who finished as Group B runners-up - will be a tough challenge but said he is confident of Zob Ahan's chances.

"I know and have analyzed the Al Ittihad team, and have seen all the matches of last season (both in the Saudi Pro League and AFC Champions League).

"We will have almost a new team for the Round of 16 as many players from the previous Champions League season are no longer with us.

(Source: the-afc)

FIBA Basketball World Cup Trophy Tour arrives at Tehran

MNA — FIBA Basketball 2019 World Cup Trophy Tour Cup arrived at Tehran's Milad tower on Thursday morning as its tour around the Iranian capital continues.

Iran will kick off the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019 with a match against Puerto Rico on Aug. 31.



The match will be held at the Guangzhou Gymnasium in Guangzhou.

Team Melli have been drawn with world's second-ranked Spain, Puerto Rico and Tunisia in Group C.

Iran will face Tunisia on Sept. 2 and meet powerhouses Spain two days later

The competition will be held in China from 31 Aug. to 15 Sept.

The 2019 FIBA Basketball World Cup will be the 18th tournament of the FIBA Basketball World Cup for men's national basketball teams.

Rescheduled from 2018 to 2019, this edition will be the first FIBA Basketball World Cup since 1967 that will not occur in the same year as the FIFA World Cup, but a year following the latter.

Esteghlal eye Italian forward Manuel Pucciarelli

Iranian football club Esteghlal have shown interest in signing Italian forward Manuel Pucciarelli.

The 28-year-old striker currently plays in Chievo.

Esteghlal Italian coach Andrea Stramaccioni has wanted the Iranian club to strengthen the team by signing Pucciarelli.

Italian teams Sassuolo and Ascoli are reportedly eying Pucciarelli.

Esteghlal have already signed Malian forward Cheick Tidiane Diabaté.

(Source: Tuttomercatoweb)

Iran taekwondoka earns gold in 2019 Universiade

IRNA – Iranian taekwondo fighter Mir Hashem Hosseini in the weight category of – 68 kg received a gold medal at the 30th Summer Universiade in the Naples, Italy.

In his first match, Hosseini defeated Mongolian rival 30-8. Then, he hit Taipei rival and advanced to quarter-finals.

After defeating, Croatian fighter in quarter-finals, he advanced to semi-final match.

He also defeated South Korean athlete and then hit Belgian rival in the final match.

Iranian team with 42 athletes took part in the competition of Universiade 2019.

The team had 62 members at the latest event of Universiade in Taiwan. They won 23 medals (8 gold, 4 silver and 11 bronze medals) and ranked 10th at the event.

The 30th edition of Universiade of university students will be underway until July 14 in Naples, Italy.

The Universiade is an international multi-sport event, organized for university athletes by the International University Sports Federation. The name is a combination of the words "University" and "Olympiad".

Cameroonian strikers linked with Persepolis

TASNIM — Cameroonian strikers Michael Cheukoua and Léonard Kweuke have been linked with a move to Iranian football club Persepolis.

Cheukoua, 22, is currently playing at Austrian football club SC Wiener Neustadt.

Cheukoua started his career at Cameroonian football club Canon Yaoundé.

Former Esteghlal striker Kweuke is also linked with a move to Persepolis.

The 32-year-old Cameroonian forward has most recently played at Turkish Club Çaykur Rizespor.

Kweuke played in Iranian football clubs Esteghlal and Steel Azin from 2006 to 2008.

Mohsen Bengar hangs up boots

TASNIM — Former Sepahan and Persepolis defender Mohsen Bengar announced on Wednesday he is ending his playing career.

He has retired from football after 22 years at the age of 40.

Bengar began his career in Shamoushak Noshahr in 2001, then moved to Sepahan in 2004. He played in the AFC Champions League and FIFA Club World Cup for Sepahan.

Bengar is one of Iran's most decorated football players. He has won the Iran Professional League three times with Sepahan.

He also claimed Hazfi Cup twice with the Isfahan-based football team.

Bengar made 14 appearances for the Iranian national football team from 2003 to 2014.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Every occurrence has a return, and what does
not return seems as if it never existed.
Imam Ali (AS)

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Painting



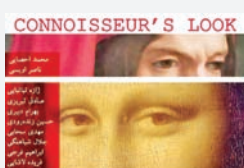
■ Tehran's CAMA – Contemporary and Modern Art Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Mehdi Sarukhani. The exhibit titled "Lost in Time" runs until July 17 at the gallery located at No. 44, 10th Golestan, Pasdaran St.



■ An exhibition of paintings by Yazdan Sadi is underway at Salees Gallery. The exhibit named "Reading Shahnameh for Hafez" will run until July 17 at the gallery located at 148 Karim Khan Ave.



■ Paintings by Saghar Hamzeli are currently on view in an exhibition at Shirin Gallery. The exhibit titled "Midazolam" will be running until July 24 at the gallery located at No. 5, 13th St., Karim Khan Ave.



■ Negar Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by a number of veteran artists, including Jalal Shababanghi, Manuchehr Niazi, Farideh Lashai, Mohammad Ehsai, Sadeq Tabrizi and Mehdi Sahabi. The exhibit entitled "Connoisseur's Look" will run until July 17 at the gallery located at 33 Delaram Alley, Roshanai St. in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.



■ Ramona Izadiyar, Reza Shah-Hosseini, Zahra Momeni, Baran Rahimi, Hamideh Shahednia, Mohsen Nazari Khanmiri and five other artists are displaying their latest paintings in an exhibition at Shalman Gallery.



The exhibit titled "Returning to the Nature" will run until July 17 at the gallery located at 27 Kavusi Alley, West Rudbar St., off Mirdamad Blvd.



■ A collection of paintings by Marzieh Qasempur is on display in an exhibition at Elaheh Gallery. The exhibit named "Misplacement" will be running until July 22 at the gallery that can be found at 47 Golfam St., off Africa Ave.



■ An exhibition of paintings by Mehdi Jalali is underway at Vaali Gallery. Entitled "Chaos Theory", the exhibit runs until July 23 at the gallery located at No. 71, Khoddami St. off of Vanak Square.



■ Paintings by Shahnaz Fotuhi are on display in an exhibition at Shokuh Gallery. The exhibit titled "Depiction of Light" will run until July 17 at the gallery that can be found at 19 Amir Nuri Alley, North Salimi St. near Andarzgu Blvd.

Multimedia



■ A group of artists, including Mahsa Shahparnia, Banafsheh Arshi, Marsa Zeinali, Elham Moradi and Mahno Shirzad, is showcasing their photos and sets of installation in an exhibition at Saye Gallery. The exhibit named "Tracking the Self" will be running until July 17 at the gallery located at No. 21, 13th Alley, Sanai St. off Karim Khan Ave.

Photo



■ An exhibition of photos by a group of artists including Babak Haqqi, Milad Karamuz, Ghazaleh Sedaqat and Ata Mohammadi is currently underway at Atbin Gallery. The exhibit entitled "From Someone Else's Frame" runs until July 23 at the gallery located at 42 Khakzad Alley, Vali-e Asr Ave. near the Parkway Intersection.

"6.5 for One Meter" tops at Hafez Awards

A R T **TEHRAN** — "6.5 for One Meter" about the horrible image of narcotics was the big winner at the 19th edition of the Hafez Awards as it was honored in several categories including best film and best director.

A large number of Iranian cineastes came together at Tehran's Milad Tower to attend the gala that is Iran's first and only private awards event in the film industry and TV productions, which is organized every year by the Persian cinematic monthly Donyaye Tasvir (Picture World).

"Making this film was a very hard job, but the hardship changed into pleasantness due to the great empathy the members of the crew had with each other and people's support for the social film," producer Seyyed Jamal Sadatian said after accepting the award for best film.

In this film, a police group under the leadership of Samad was assigned to arrest Nasser Khakzad, a major drug trafficker in Tehran.

In his acceptance speech, writer and director Saeid Rustai also described making the film a hard job and said, "The film would never have been completed if it had not been for my crew's sympathy."

In each of the categories best actor and best actress two people were awarded.

Peyman Maadi won one of the wards for best actor for portrayal of Samad in "6.5 for One Meter" and Navid Mohammadzadeh received the other award for his role in "Sheeple" directed by Hoomand Seyyedi.

"6.5 for One Meter" also brought Hooman Behmanesh the award for best cinematographer.

The awards for best actress were presented to Baran Kowsari and Sabnam Moqaddami for their roles in "Cold Sweat" and "Don't Be Embarrassed" respectively. Hamid Nematollah won the special jury award for "Flaming" and actor Reza Attaran received the Award for Special Personal Achievements.

The writer and director of "Sheeple", Seyyedi won the award for best screenwriter. The film is about brothers Shakur and Shahin, two lowlifes who run a hidden crystal meth laboratory in Tehran. They do care about the honor of their family. However, when a video of their sister revealing her hair ends up on the Internet, the brothers become the protagonists of some strange incidents.



Actress Golab Adineh accepts an honor for her lifetime achievements during the 19th Hafez Awards at Milad Tower in Tehran on July 11, 2019.

"I hate screenwriting, but this award makes me want to continue on this path," said Seyyedi after receiving the award.

Golab Adineh, the star of acclaimed movies such as "The Blue-Veiled", "Under the Skin of the City" and "Canary Yellow" was also honored for her lifetime achievements.

In her acceptance speech, Adineh called actors Mehdi Hashemi and Sussan Taslimi her first teachers,

and also extended her thanks to director Rakhshan Bani-Etemad.

"If she hadn't asked me to act in 'The Blue-Veiled' and 'Canary Yellow', I would never have been elevated to this status," she added.

"The Lady of the Mansion" directed by Azizollah Hamidnejad was selected as best TV series. It is about a Qajar prince who marries a young girl and brings her to his mansion full of dark secrets.

UNICEF to honor film at Isfahan festival



International Film Festival for Children and Youth director Alireza Tabesh (C) and Iranian actress Mahtab Keramati (1st L) discuss the UNICEF award at the Farabi Cinema Foundation in Tehran on July 9, 2019. (FCF)

A R T **TEHRAN** — The director of the festival, Alireza Tabesh, the director of the UNICEF communications department in Iran, Bahareh Yeganefar, and Keramati discussed the details of the award in a session held at Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation last Tuesday.

"Collaboration with UNICEF can help achieve the goals of the festival leading to innovation in the children's entertainment industry," Tabesh said.

"This collaboration can continue throughout the years and develop further by organizing a number of events dedicated to children, helping the future of Iranian children to flourish," he added.

Movies with children's daily life concerns, realism and creativity in their screenplay will be reviewed for the UNICEF award.

The festival will be running in the central Iranian city of Isfahan from August 19 to 26.



Iranian director Majid Majidi in an undated photo.

Majid Majidi to make new movie "The Sun" on teenagers' issues in Iran

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian Oscar-nominated director Majid Majidi plans to make his new film "The Sun" in Iran, Persian news websites have announced.

His team is looking for a boy between 12 and 14 across the country to play the role of the leading character of the film co-written by Majidi and Nima Javidi. The film is about teenagers' issues.

A number of teenage boys auditioned for the movie in the central Iranian city of Yasuj last month.

Majidi has previously used teenage amateur actors in his movies such as "Father", "Children of Heaven"

Shakespeare "A Midsummer Night's Dream", "Coriolanus" coming to Tehran theater



Members of director Mostafa Kushki's troupe perform "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at the Tehran Independent Theater on July 17, 2016. (Tehran Picture Agency/Milad Beheshti)

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Mostafa Kushki will stage William Shakespeare's plays "Coriolanus" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at the Tehran Independent Theater.

The first performance of the comedy "A Midsummer Night's Dream" will take place on July 22, and his troupe will perform the tragedy "Coriolanus" on July 25, the theater has announced. The plays will remain on stage until August 21.

The five-act play "Coriolanus" written in 1608 is based on the life of Gnaeus Marcus Coriolanus, a legendary Roman hero of the late 6th and early 5th centuries.

Fatemeh Asadi, Hedyeh Bakhtiari, Mahshad Pakdaman, Mina Heidarzadeh, Yazdan Darabi, Milad Sheikhlari and Iman Abdi are the members of the cast for "Coriolanus".

Kushki is also due to stage "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at the

Gyula Shakespeare Festival, in Gyula, Hungary on Sunday.

Written in 1595 and 1596, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" portrays the events surrounding the marriage of Theseus, the Duke of Athens, to Hippolyta, the former queen of the Amazons.

A cast composed of Azin Nazari, Mohammad-Sadeq Maleki, Sajjad Baqeri, Ghazal Shojaei, Amir-Mehdi Juleh, Shahruz Delafkar, Nazafarin Kazemi, Khatereh Hatami, Alireza Keymanesh and Kushki himself will perform the play at the Erkel Ferenc Cultural House.

The weeklong festival, which opened on July 8, is part of a six-week all-arts festival, featuring the performances of historical dramas, different forms of contemporary theater, opera, ballet, modern dance, jazz, blues, puppet shows, classical music, folk music and folk dance.

Iranian women gather to mark Modesty and Hijab Day

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — Iranian women held gatherings in over 400 cities across the country on Thursday to mark Modesty and Hijab Day.

Tehran's meeting named "The Meeting of the Revolution's Girls" was organized at Shiroudi Stadium.

"By organizing these meetings, Iranian women intend to annul the enemy's activities against hijab and also to promote modest behavior as well as to avoid gaudiness in society," Minu Aslani, the director of the Community of Iranian Basiji Women, which is the main organizer of the meetings,

said during a press conference on Wednesday.

The community also organized exhibitions and competitions on the sidelines of the meetings.

Seman, Shiraz, Isfahan, Tabriz and Mashhad were among the numerous cities playing host to the meetings for

Modesty and Hijab Day.

The 21st of Tir, which fell on July 12 this year, is commemorated as Modesty and Hijab Day every year in memory of those people who were martyred at Goharshad Mosque in Mashhad in 1936 in protest of Reza Shah Pahlavi's decree banning all Islamic veils.